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SONIC'S FRIENDLY NEMESIS

KNUCKLES™

#3 OF 3 ISSUE MINI-SERIES

DIRECT EDITION

SO THERE I WAS GOING TO A COOL PARTY AT MY NEW SCHOOL...

AND I DIDN'T KNOW ANYBODY. I MEAN I WAS SHAKIN' IN MY SHOES!

I FELT LIKE I WAS FROM ANOTHER PLANET.

THEN THE CAP'N OF CONFIDENCE SHOWS UP WITH MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE— CRUNCHBERRIES® CEREAL!

THANKS TO THAT DELICIOUS CRUNCHBERRIES BLAST

AND THE HELP OF CAP'N CRUNCH I WAS READY TO PARTY!!

AND I DID.

MADE A TON OF FRIENDS AND WE DANCED OUR BRAINS OUT!

YOU AND THE CAP'N MAKE IT HAPPEN!

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SONIC'S FRIENDLY NEMESIS KNUCKLES No. 5 | of 3 | Issue Anniversary Issue | 1996 published by Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543. Printed in Canada. President and Co-Publisher: Michael Eisenberg. Chairman and Co-Publisher: Richard Goldwater. Single copies $1.50 in the U.S., $1.85 in Canada. SEGA and GENESIS are registered with the U.S. patent and trademark office. Sonic's Friendly Nemesis Knuckles and all related characters and indicia are trademarks of SEGA. © 1996 SEGA. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Any resemblance between characters, names, persons and/or institutions in this book and anything dead, or not dead, or alive, or undead, or half-dead, or half-alive, are not intended and if they exist, are purely coincidental. FOOTNOTES: Unless otherwise noted, all stories in SONIC'S FRIENDLY NEMESIS KNUCKLES are copyright © 1996 Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543.

Deep within the heart of the ebon citadel, the fate of everything as we know it will be decided. A battle to be fought, with neither side offering or giving any quarter. Here, the past collides with the present as descendent squares off against ancestor.

The fiercest of opponents in any conflict are always those linked with the thickest of blood. For them, matters become more personal as the struggle evolves from the mere physical contest to one of conquering the opponent's heart and soul.

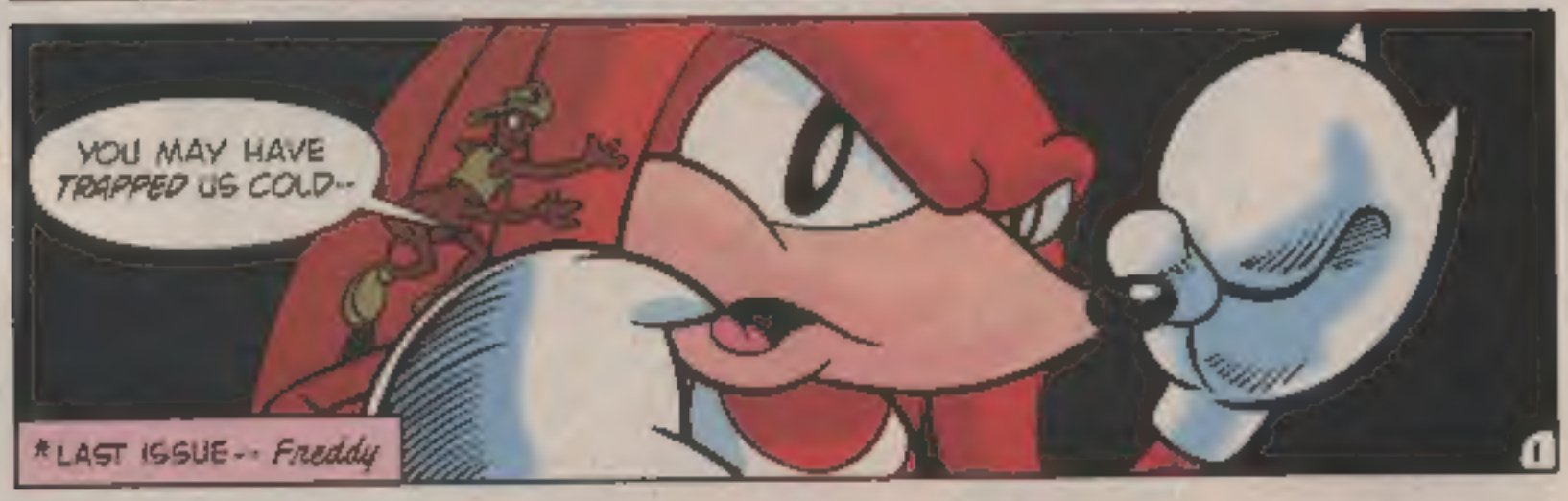
Up until now, KNUCKLES has been master of all he surveyed on the tropical paradise known as the FLOATING ISLAND, content in the belief that his was a noble calling. Now he must fight for what he believes in, or surrender to a legacy of fear.

Although guided by his mentor, the fire-ant known as ARCHIMEDES, KNUCKLES may find he needs more than a little help...
...he may need a miracle as well.

THE SERENE CALM OF THE NIGHT SKY OVER NEKRONOPOLIS...

...CONCEALS WELL THE CONFLICT ABOUT TO ERUPT!
YOU CAN DO THIS EASY--
--OR YOU CAN DO IT ROUGH!
EITHER WAY--

WAIT FOR MY SIGNAL!
-- ENERJAK STILL WINS!


YOU MAY HAVE TRAPPED US COLD--
*LAST ISSUE -- Freddy

SONIC'S FRIENDLY NEMESIS
KNUCKLES™
RITES
...BUT WE CAN STILL MAKE IT HOT FOR YOU!
FWI

SCRIPT: KEN PENDERS & MIKE KANTEROVICH
PENCILS: ART MAWHINNEY
INKS: HARVO
LETTERING: MINDY EISMAN
COLORING: KYLE HUNTER
EDITOR: FREDDY MENDEZ-GABRIE
MANAGING EDITOR: VICTOR GORELICK
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: RICHARD GOLDWATER

--OR I'LL REALLY *COOL* YOU OFF--

IN CASE OF FIRE, BREAK ASS!

KER-RAASH!

--WITH SOME HEAVY DUTY *H-TWO-DOUBLE ZERO!*

S-S-SMOKIN'!!

FLOOOOSSHH!

HEY!

WHERE'D THAT *FOG* COME FROM?!

WHERE'D THEY *GO*?!

WHO KNOWS WHAT *FEAR* LURKS IN THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN *DUPED*?

THAT *VOICE*-- GIVES ME THE *CHILLS!*

WHERE'S IT COMING FROM?

WE KNOW!

POW!

UGGHHH!!

GOOD THING FOR ME YOU AREN'T YOURSELF, MIGHTY--
--OR ELSE THIS WOULD BE MIGHTY TOUGH!
AS FOR YOU, VECTOR--
--I THINK YOU NEED TO SIT THIS ONE OUT!
SORRY ABOUT THIS, KID--
--BUT BETTER A BEE THAN ME!
I SHOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED THIS!
MY MINDLESS MINIONS CAN'T THINK FOR THEMSELVES!
THEREFORE--
"-- I MUST TAKE ACTION!"
ENOUGH!
ARCHIMEDES--!
WHAT'S-- HAPPENING-- TO-- USSSS...
ALRIGHT, MY PROGRAMMED PUPPETS--
BRING THE ECHIDNA AND FIRE-ANT TO ME!
AFTER ALL, IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME--

KNUCKLES ART

Adam Wallenrang
Peoria Hts., IL

Alan Simpson
Richmond, Va

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Renkenkema, NY

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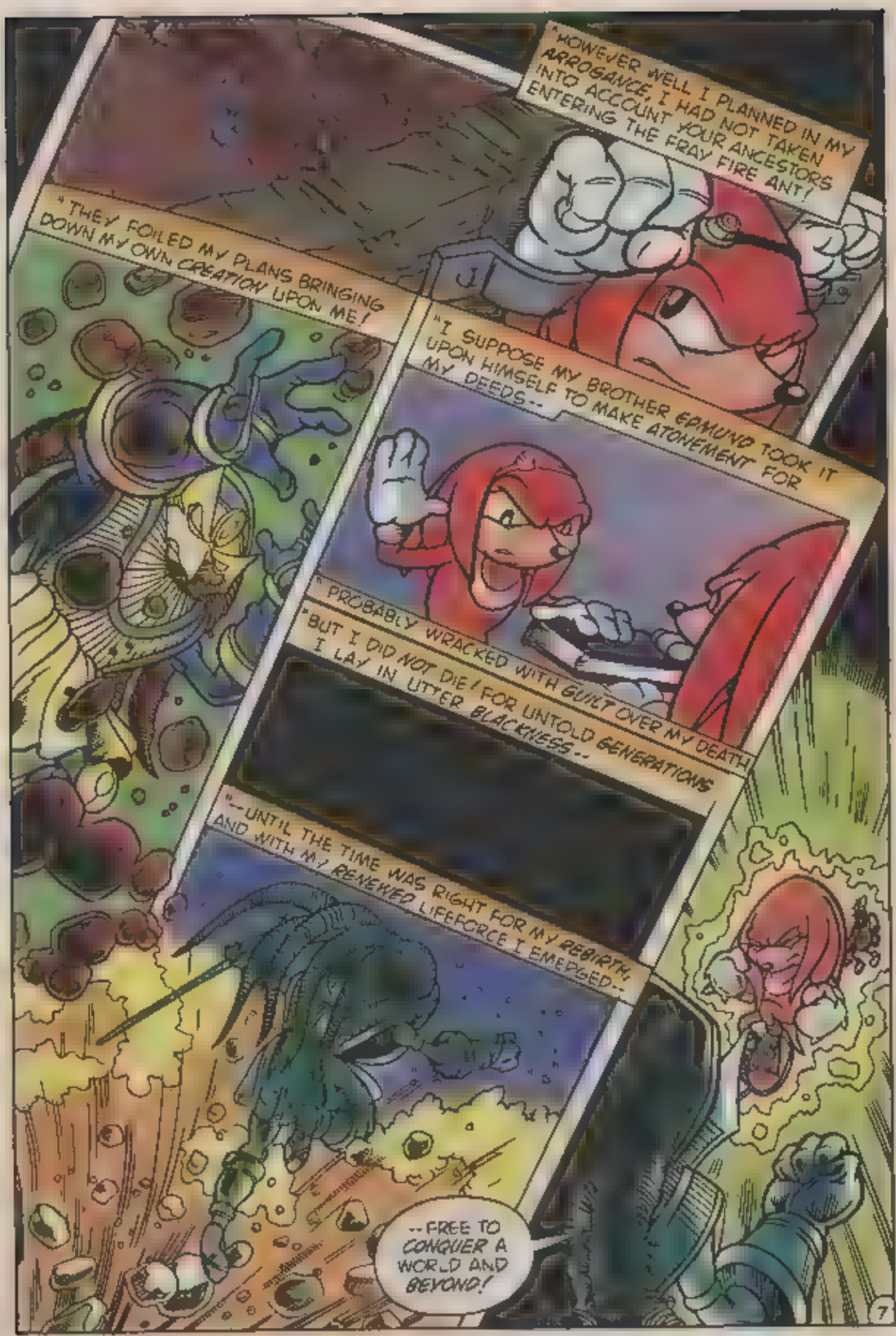
"SINCE I WAS TEC WITH THE FAMILY!"
I'M QUITE SURE, ECHIDNA YOU HAVEN'T ANY CONCEPT JUST HOW LONG -
--BUT I'D WAGER THE FIRE-ANT DOES!
DID YOU KNOW THAT AT ONE TIME THE ECHIDNAS WERE THE MOST ADVANCED SPECIES ON MOBIUS?
"MY BROTHER EDMUND AND I WERE ECHIDNAPOLIS' TOP SCIENTISTS, AND IT WAS OUR DREAM TO RESTORE THE FLOATING ISLAND TO IT'S NATIVE MOBIUS UTILIZING THE ENERGY OF THE CHAOS EMERALDS!
"I CREATED THE CHAOS SYPHON, WHICH WOULD GRADUALLY ABSORB THE ENERGY GENERATED BY THE EMERALDS, THUS LOWERING US UNTIL WE WERE REJOINED WITH THE LAND!
"HOWEVER WE WERE DENIED BY THE COUNCIL ELDERS--FOOLISH OLD MEN TOO WEAK-WILLED TO SEE THAT OUR PREDICAMENT REQUIRED A SOLUTION THAT WAS BOLD AND DARING!
"MY BROTHER WAS AMONG THEM! AND SO IT FELL TO ME TO CARRY OUT THE PLAN!
"UNFORTUNATELY
"WHAT I DIDN'T COUNT ON WAS A REDIRECTION OF THE ENERGY THAT WAS CHANNELED INTO ME CHANGING ME -
"INTO SOMETHING FAR MORE!"


"HOWEVER WELL I PLANNED IN MY ARROGANCE, I HAD NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT YOUR ANCESTORS ENTERING THE FRAY FIRE ANT!
"THEY FOILED MY PLANS BRINGING DOWN MY OWN CREATION UPON ME!
"I SUPPOSE MY BROTHER EDMUND TOOK IT UPON HIMSELF TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR MY DEEDS--
"PROBABLY WRACKED WITH GUILT OVER MY DEATH
"BUT I DID NOT DIE! FOR UNTOLD GENERATIONS I LAY IN UTTER BLACKNESS--
"--UNTIL THE TIME WAS RIGHT FOR MY REBIRTH, AND WITH MY RENEWED LIFEFORCE I EMERGED--
--FREE TO CONQUER A WORLD AND BEYOND!

OF ALL WHO COULD *POSSIBLY* STAND IN MY WAY WERE *YOU* TWO -

--MAKING YOUR *REMOVAL* FROM THE SCENE MY HIGHEST *PRIORITY!*

I ADMIT *AMAZEMENT* THAT YOU MADE IT HERE THROUGH THE DESERT!

WE'RE *NOT* REALLY HERE Y KNOW· WE RE A *MIRAGE*. YOU'RE MAGINING THINGS IN YOUR STATE OF *DELUSIONAL GRANDEUR!*

INTEREST NG--

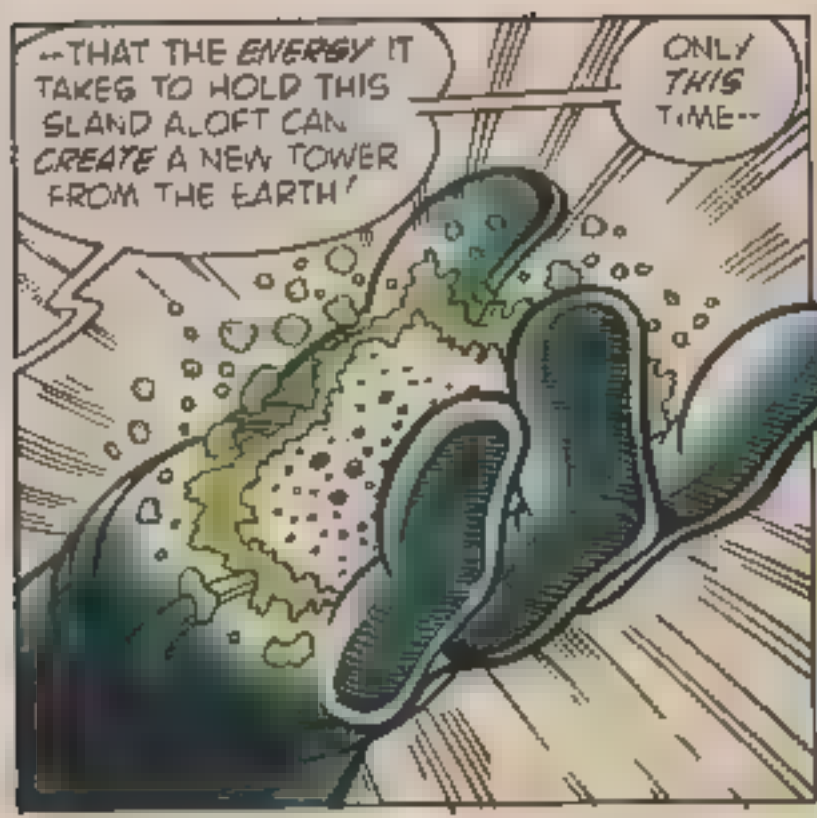
--HE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THE *OASIS* WE *FOUND* OUT THERE!

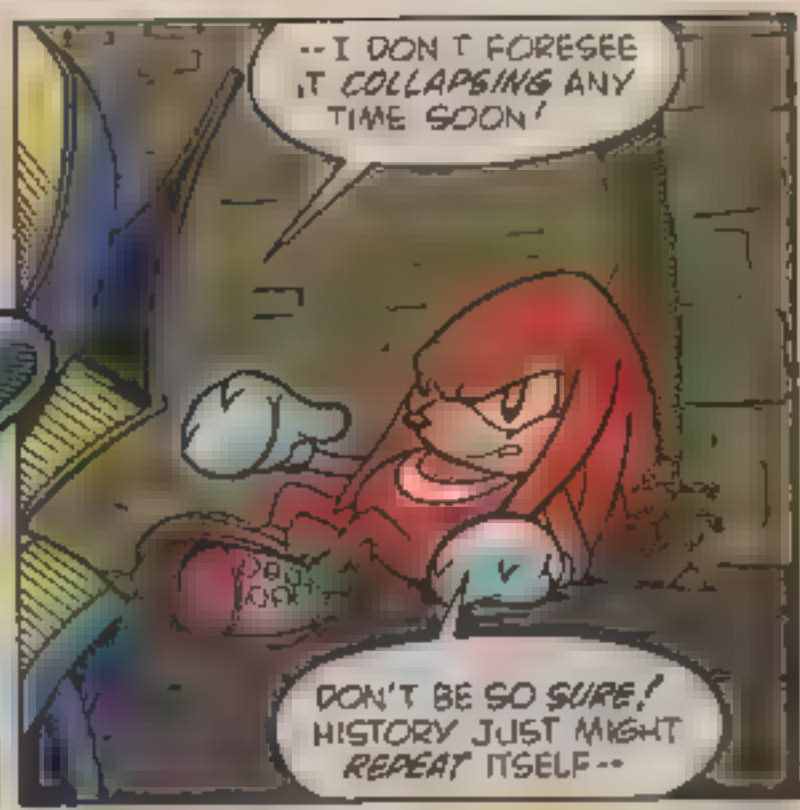
DON'T MOCK ME, YOUNG PUP!

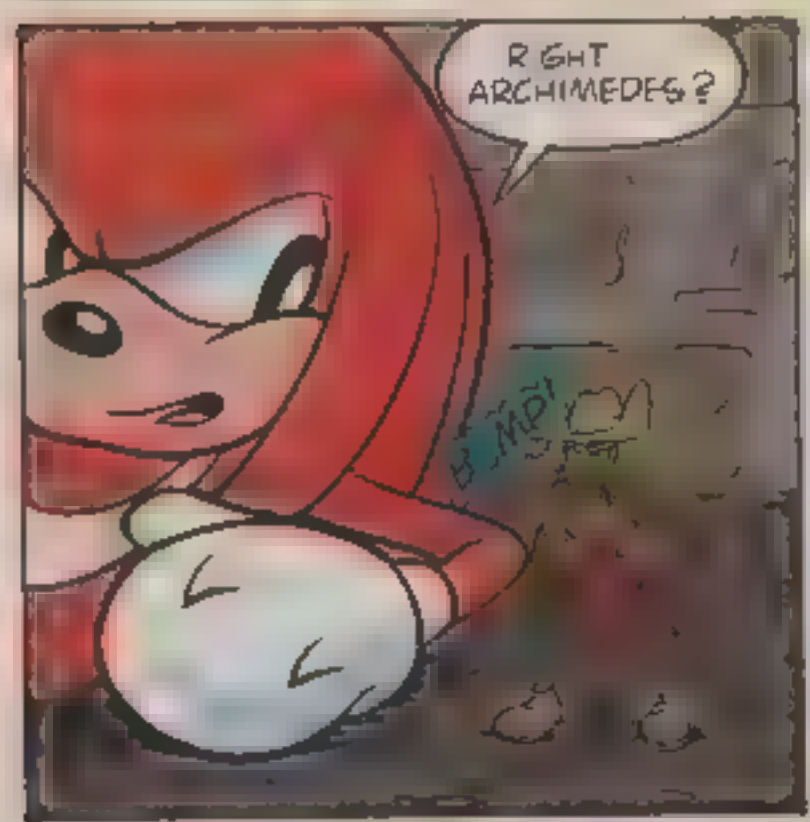
BEHOLD!

YOU *CAN'T* EVEN BEGIN TO *COMPREHEND* THE POWER I WELD!

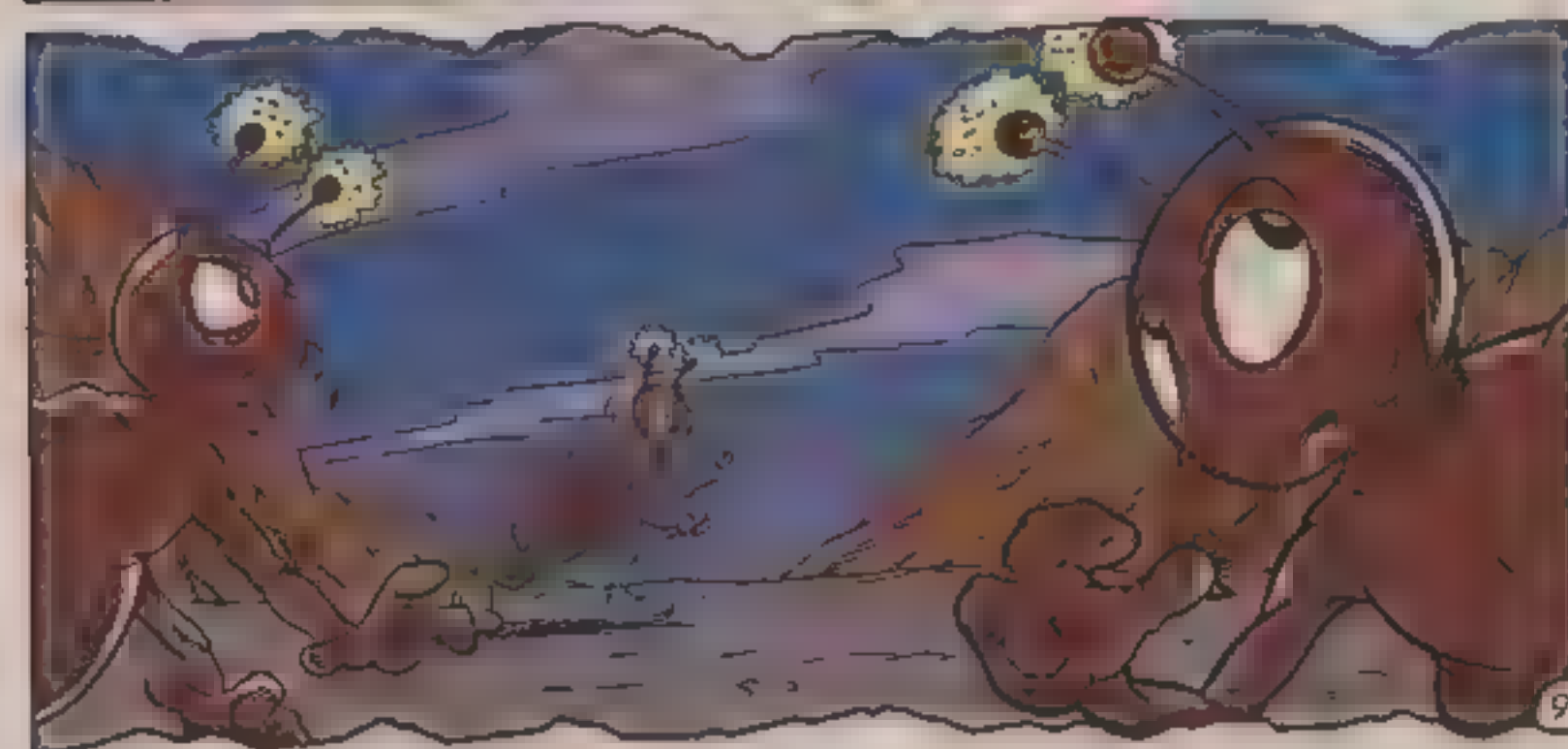
POWER SO *LIMITLESS*--

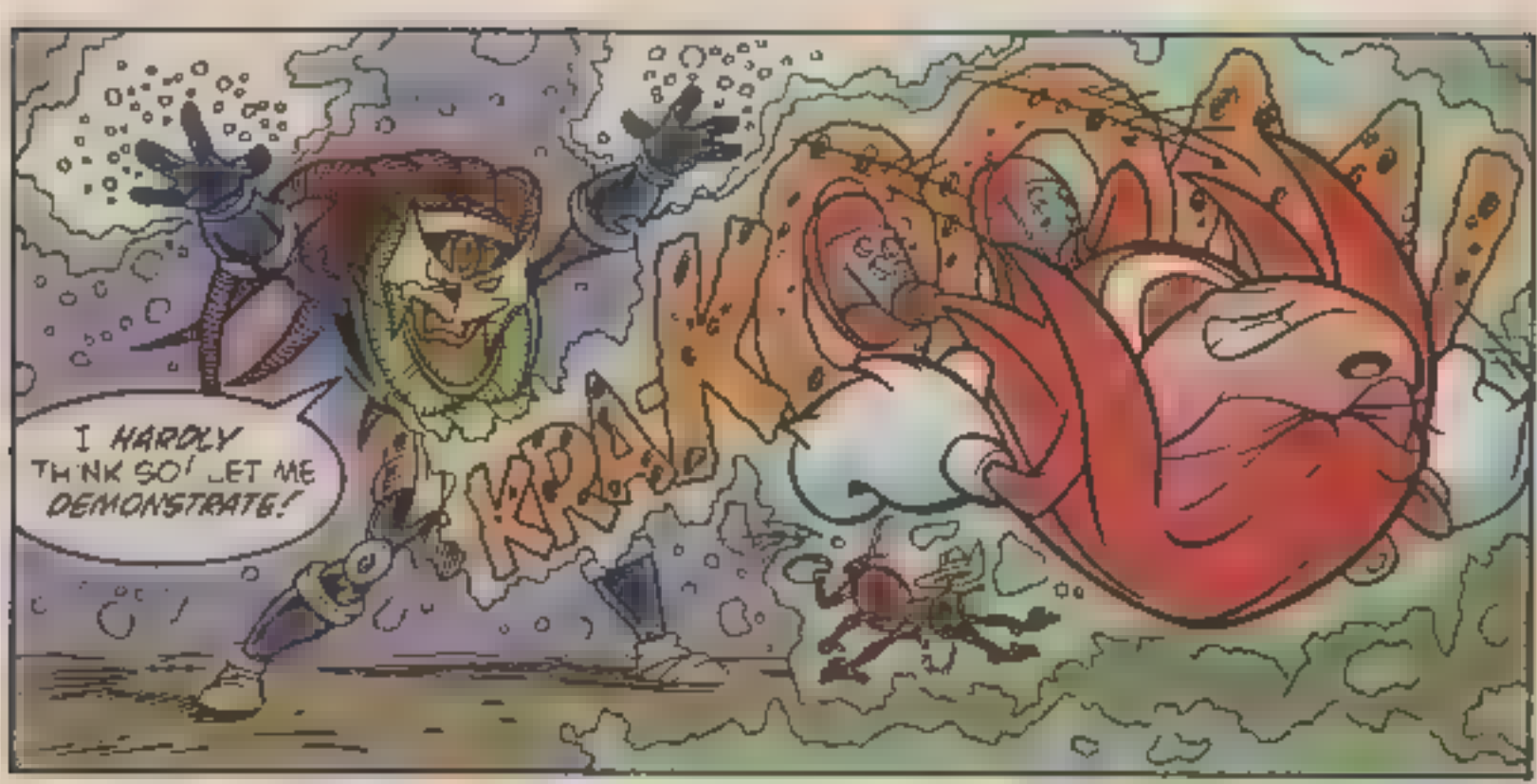

--THAT THE *ENERGY* IT TAKES TO HOLD THIS ISLAND ALOFT CAN *CREATE* A NEW TOWER FROM THE EARTH!
ONLY *THIS* TIME--

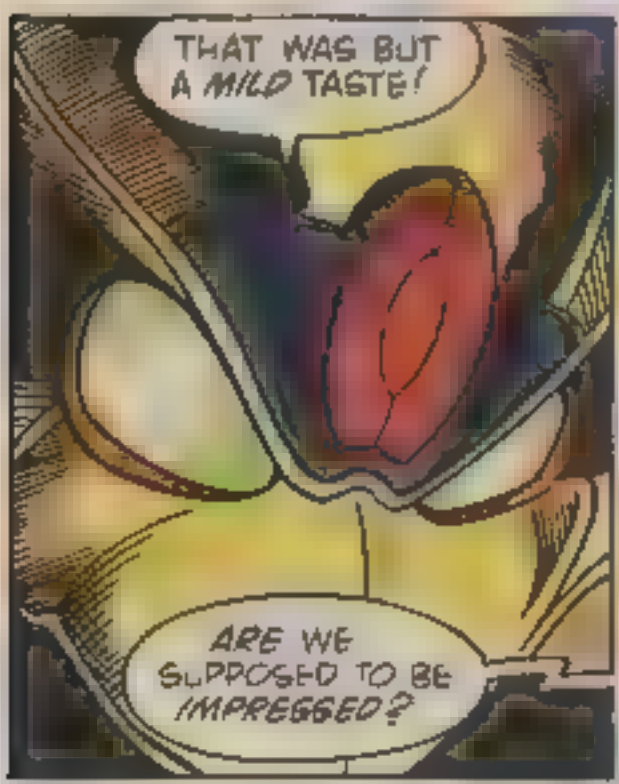

--I DON'T FORESEE IT *COLLAPSING* ANY TIME SOON!
DON'T BE SO *SURE*! HISTORY JUST MIGHT *REPEAT* ITSELF--

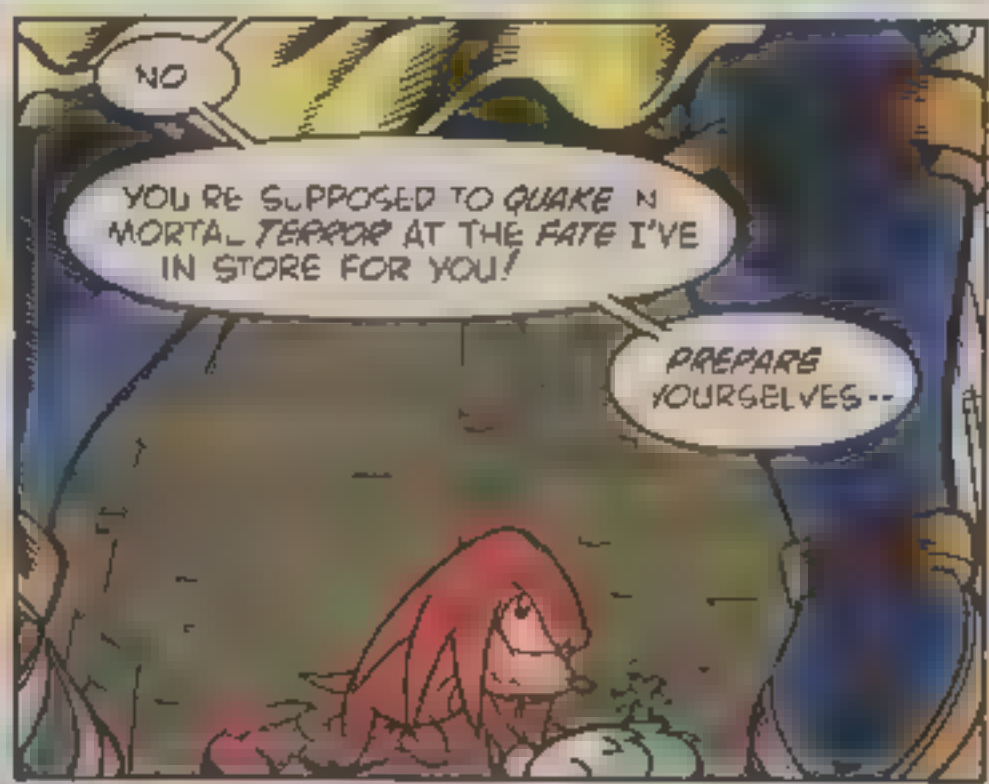

RIGHT ARCHIMEDES?
MP!

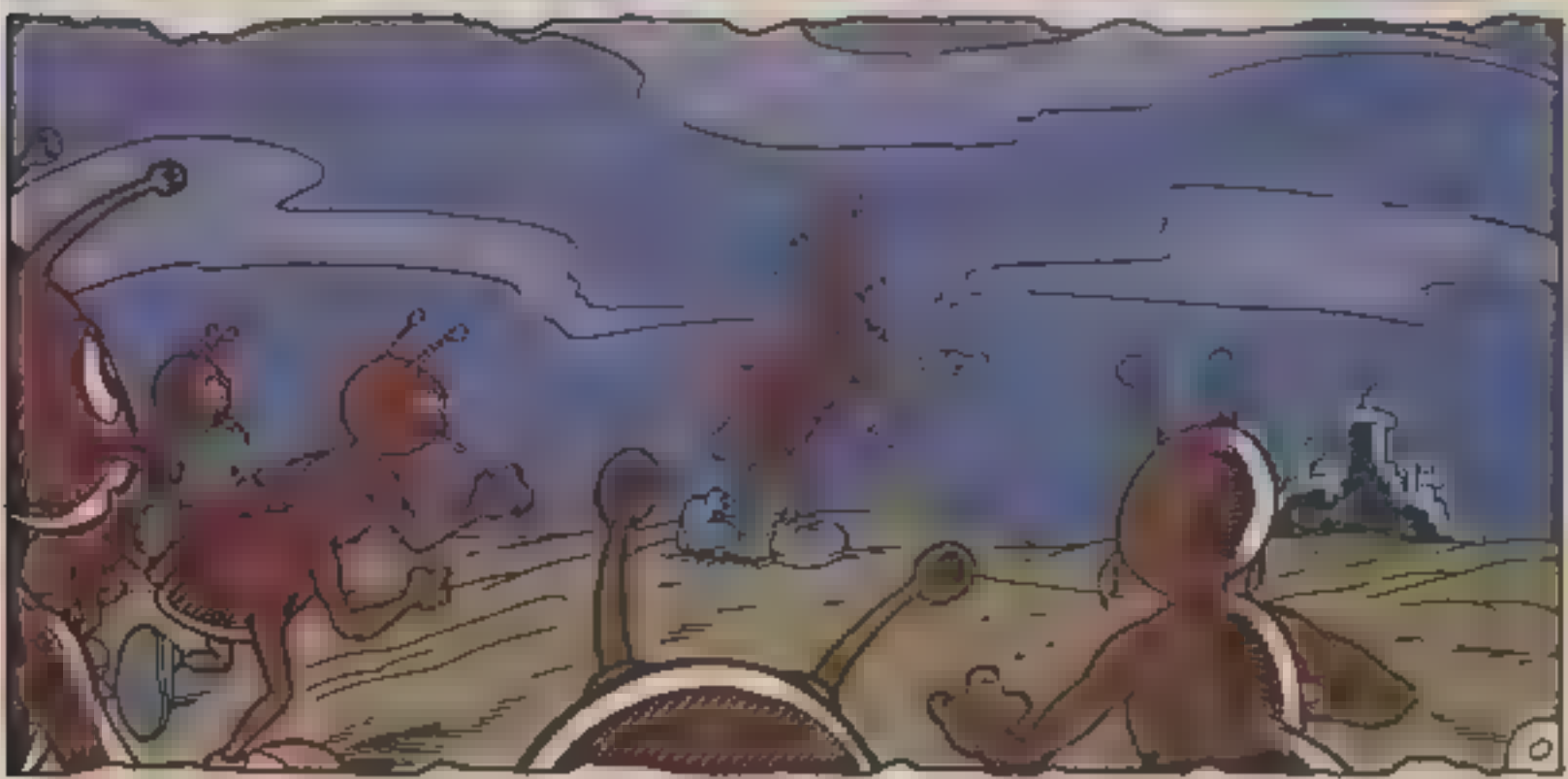
TRUER THAN EVEN YOU KNOW, ECHIDNA!



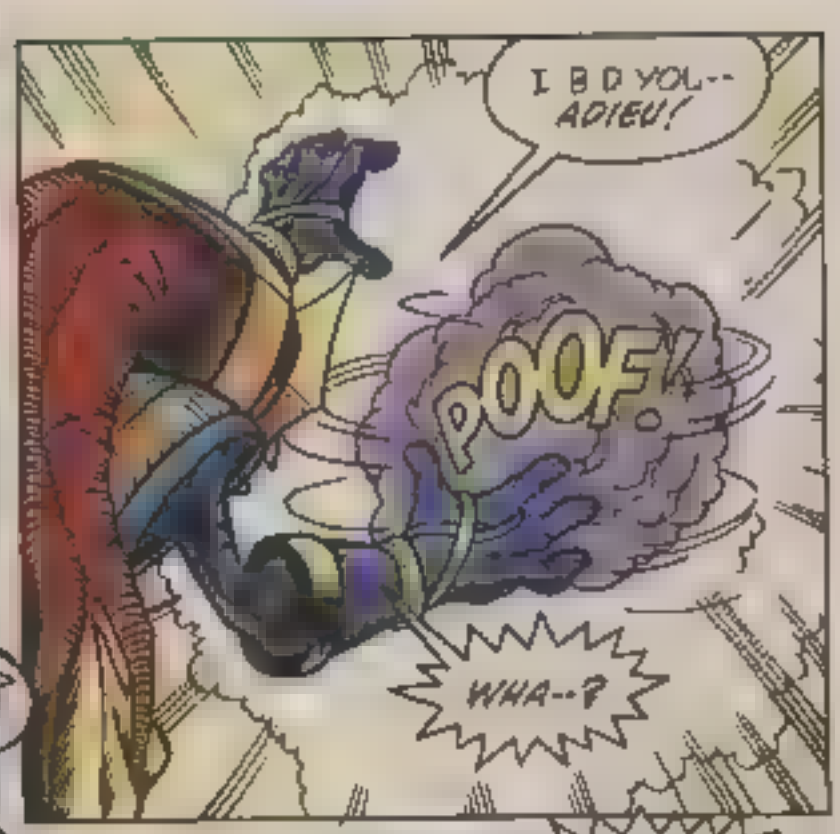

I HARDLY THINK SO! LET ME DEMONSTRATE!
KRAK

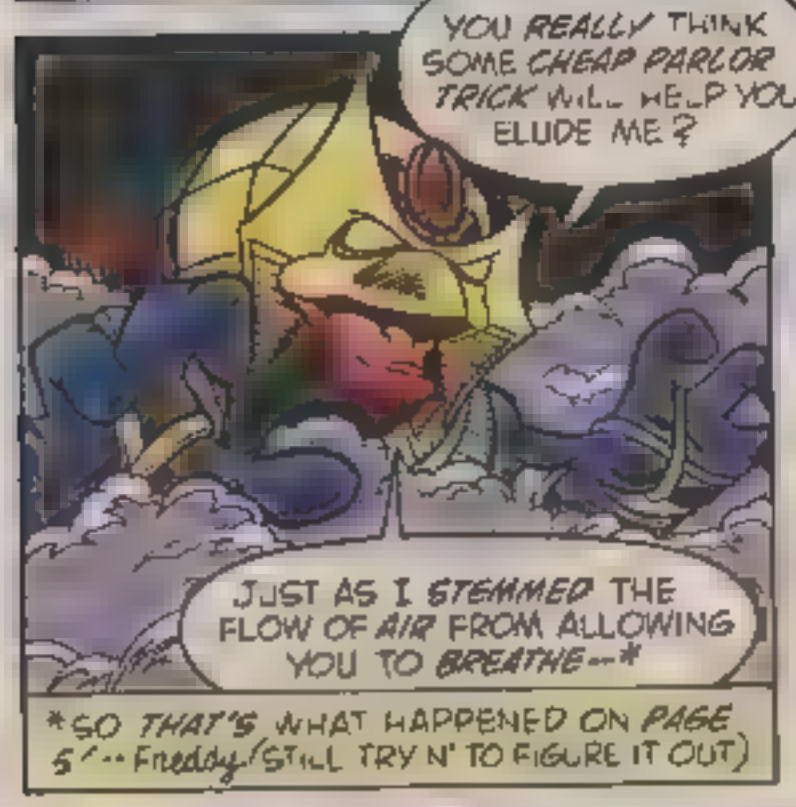

THAT WAS BUT A MILD TASTE!
ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BE IMPREGGED?

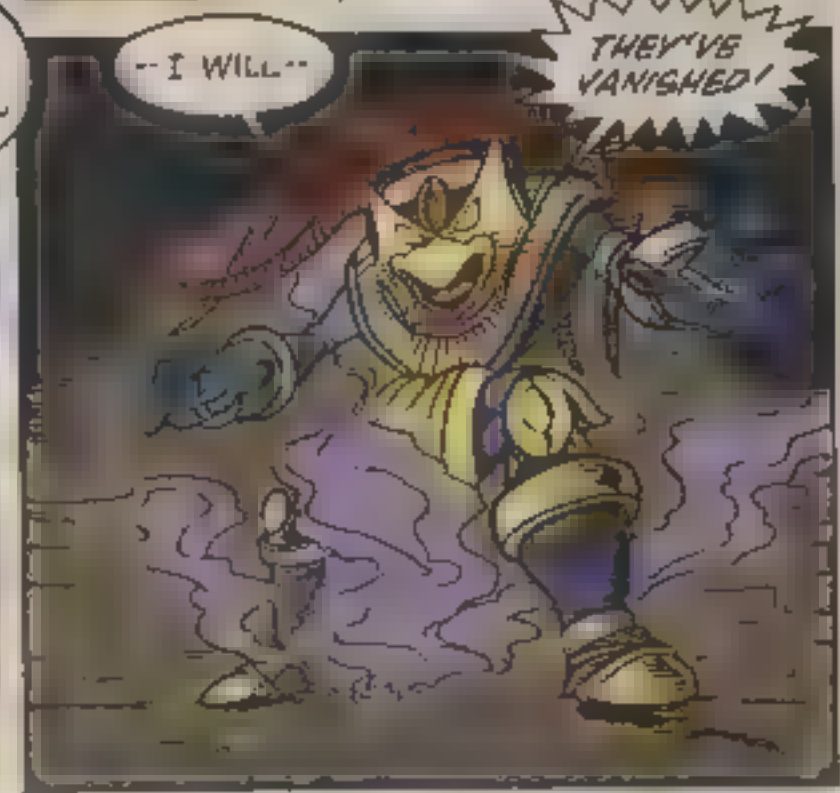

NO
YOU RE SUPPOSED TO QUAKE N MORTAL TERROR AT THE FATE I'VE IN STORE FOR YOU!
PREPARE YOURSELVES--

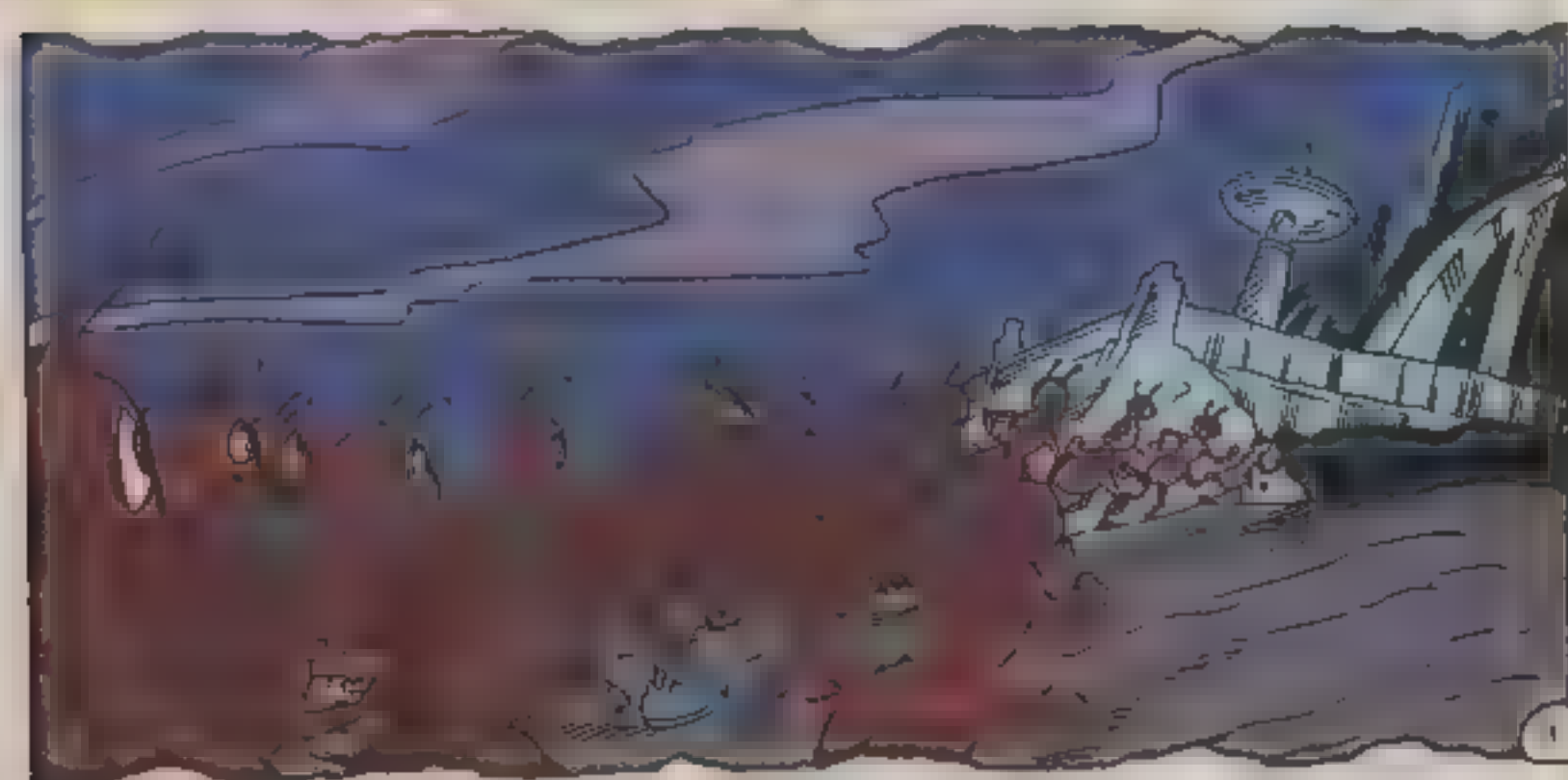


--FOR THIS IS ONE TIME YOU CANNOT ESCAPE!
WAIT FOR MY SIGNAL LAD!


I BID YOU-- ADIEU!
POOF!
WHA--?


YOU REALLY THINK SOME CHEAP PARLOR TRICK WILL HELP YOU ELUDE ME?
JUST AS I STEMMED THE FLOW OF AIR FROM ALLOWING YOU TO BREATHE--*
*SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED ON PAGE 5'-- Freddy (STILL TRYIN' TO FIGURE IT OUT)


--I WILL--
THEY'VE VANISHED!



"OF ALL THE--ATTENTION *CHAOTIX*! THE *ECHIDNA* AND *FIRE-ANT* ARE ON THE *LOOSE*!

"*LOCATE* AND *CAPTURE*-- THEN *BRING* THEM TO ME!"

THE *MASTER* COMMANDS!

WE MUST BE *QUICK* W TH OUR *TASK*!

THERE THEY GO!

THIS *ILLUSION* TRICK IS SOMETH NG ELSE!

SO WHAT'S *NEXT*?

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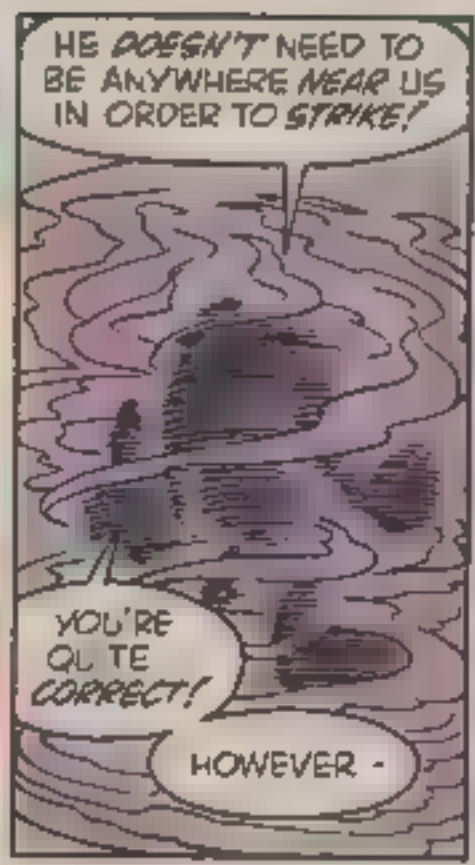
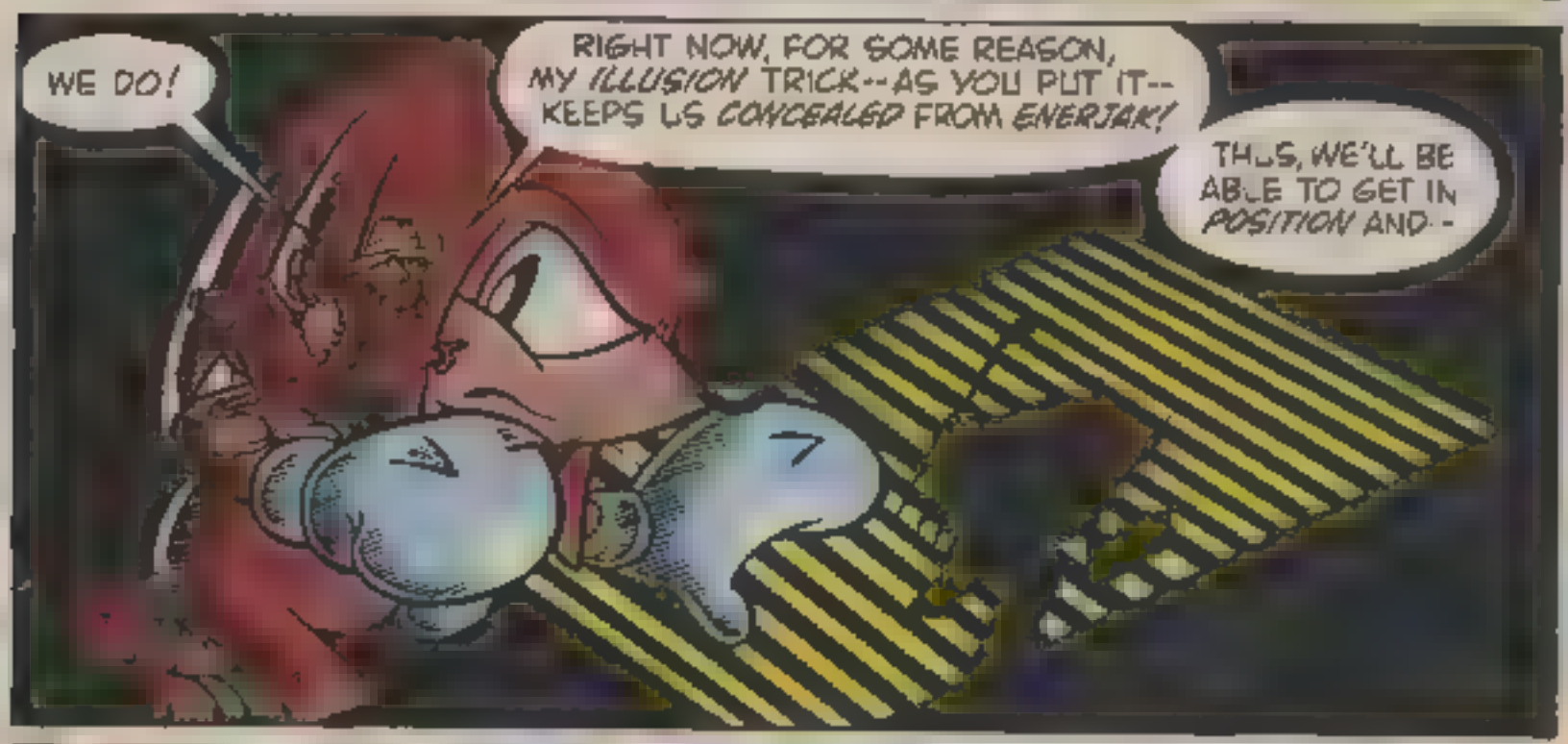
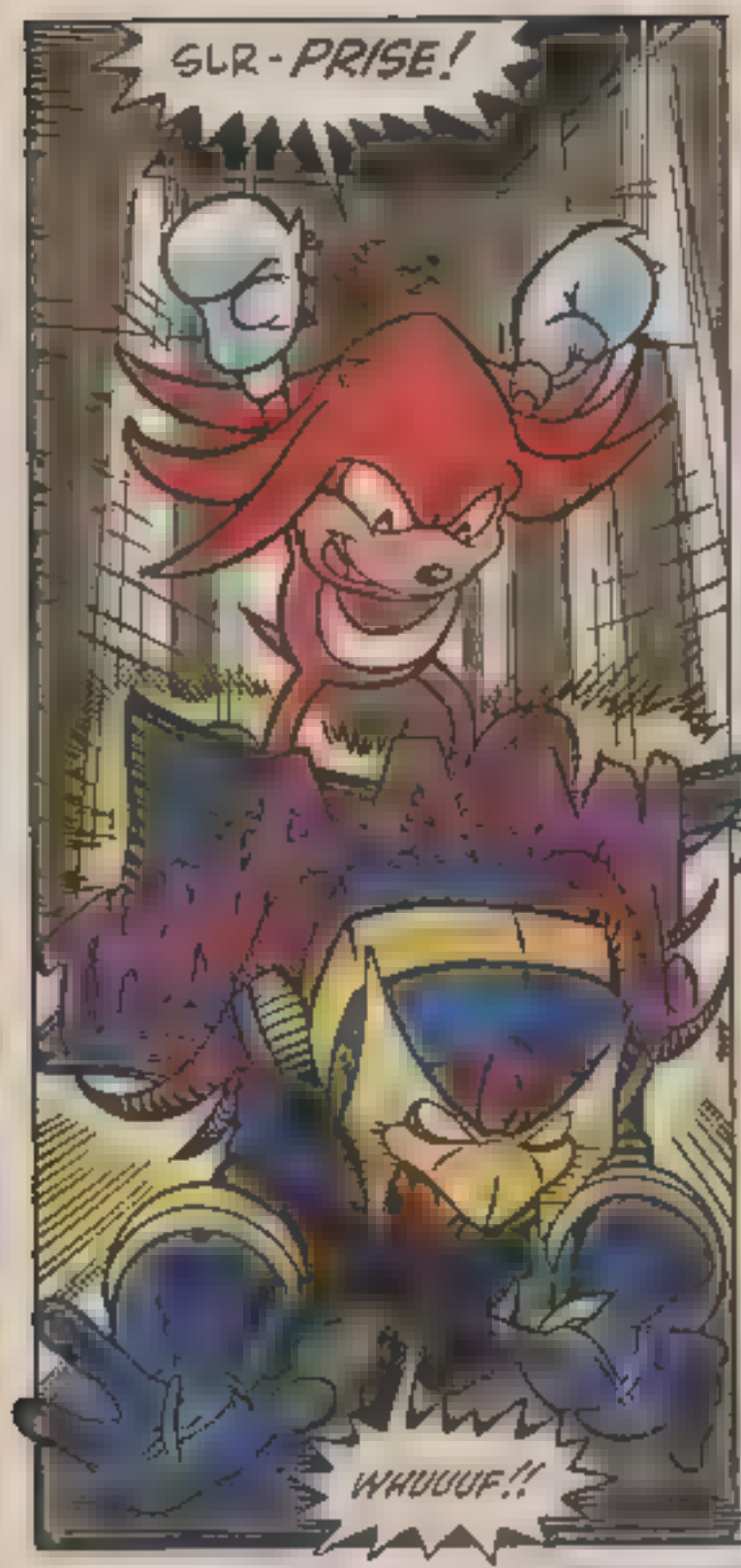
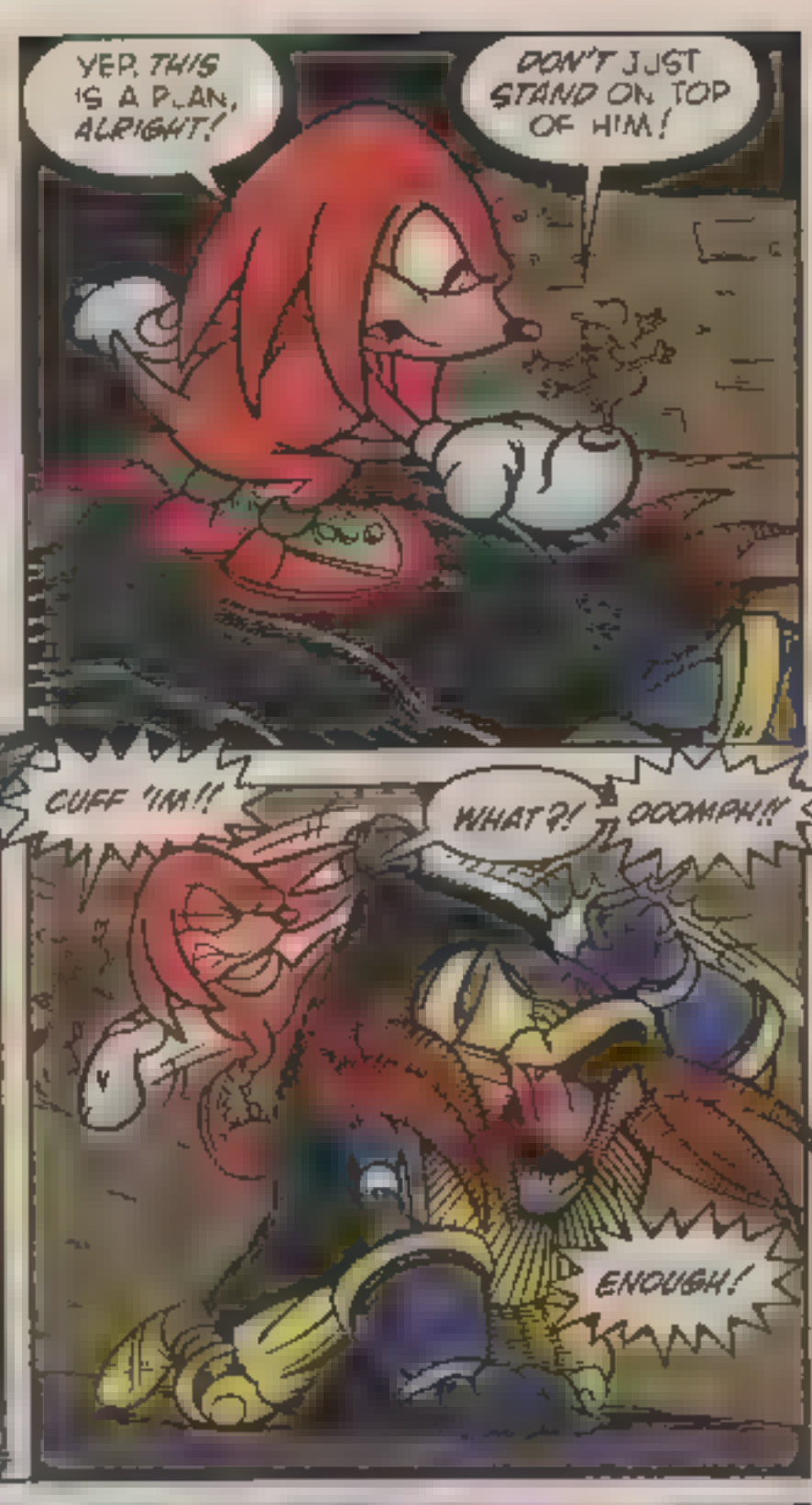
NEXT--WE PREPARE TO COUNTERATTACK!
HOW DO YOU PROPOSE WE DO THAT?

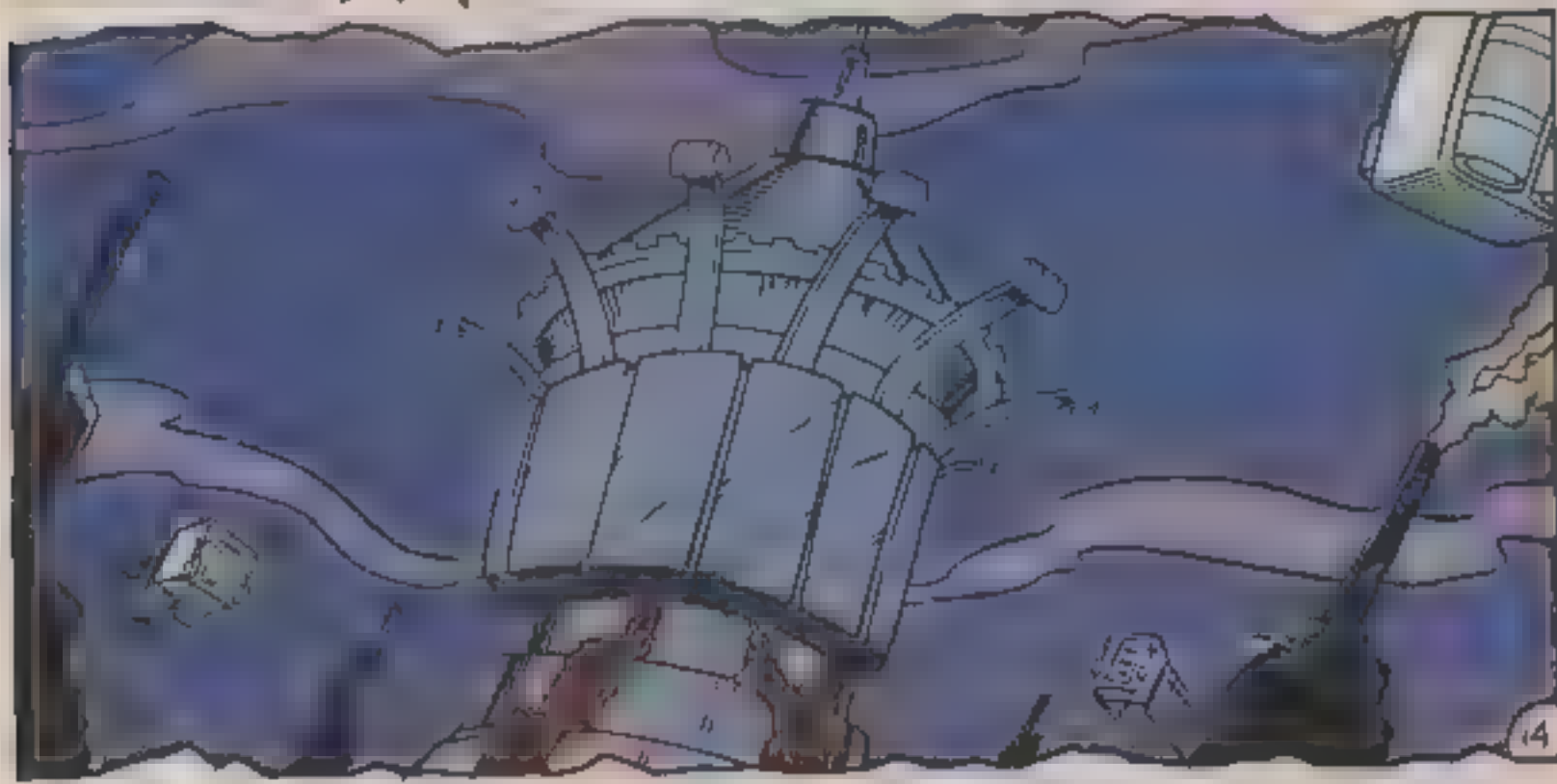

HE DOESN'T NEED TO BE ANYWHERE NEAR US IN ORDER TO STRIKE!
YOU'RE QUITE CORRECT!
HOWEVER -

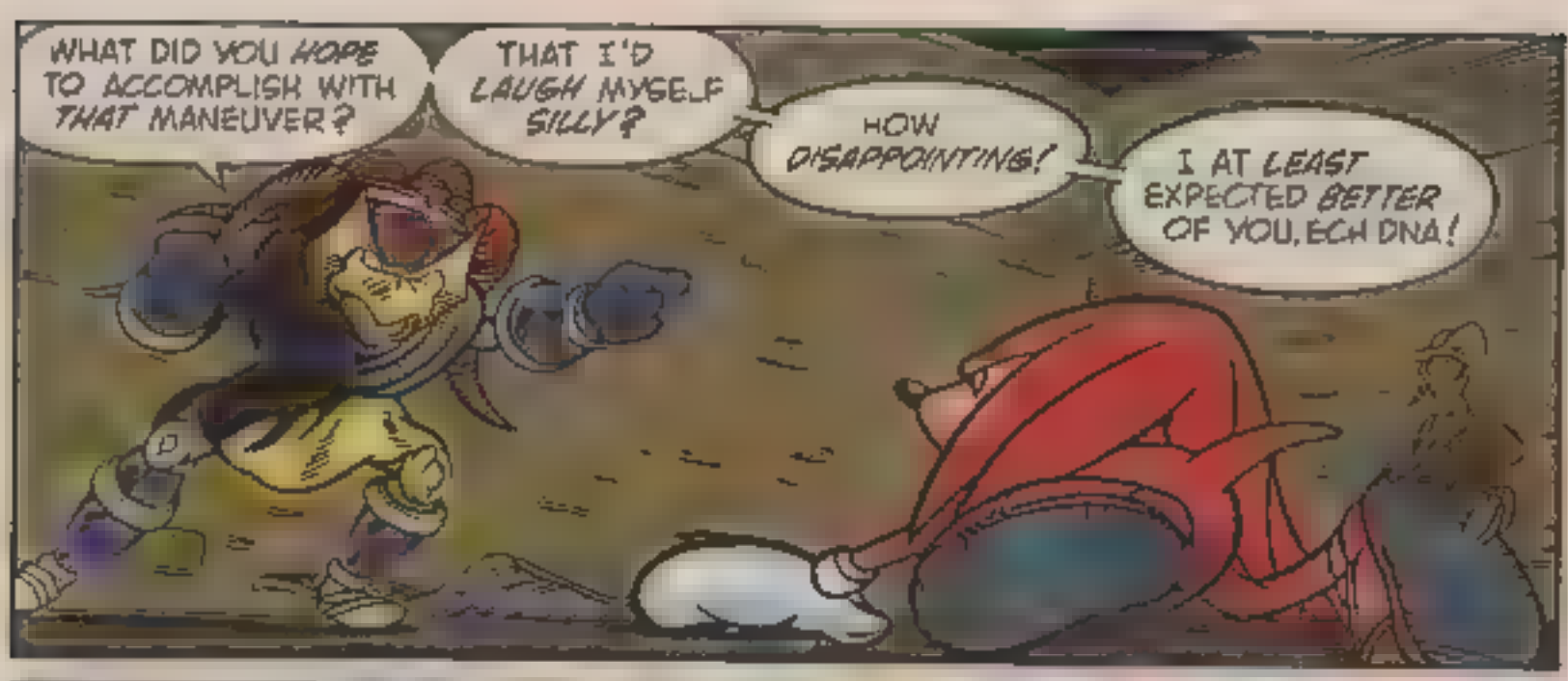
--WE HAVE AN ACE UP OUR SLEEVE!
WE DO?


WE DO!
RIGHT NOW, FOR SOME REASON, MY ILLUSION TRICK--AS YOU PUT IT--KEEPS US CONCEALED FROM ENERJAK!
THUS, WE'LL BE ABLE TO GET IN POSITION AND -


SUR-PRISE!
WHUUUF!!

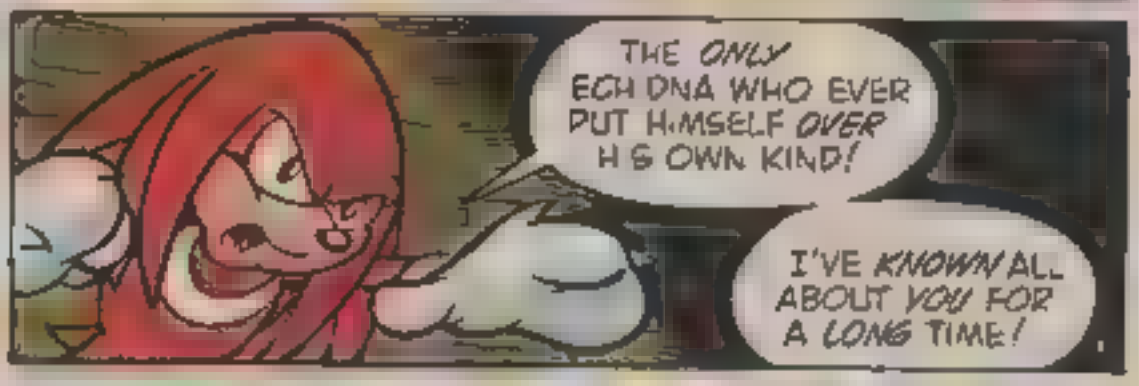

YEP. THIS IS A PLAN, ALRIGHT!
DON'T JUST STAND ON TOP OF HIM!
CUFF 'IM!!
WHAT?!
OOOMPH!!
ENOUGH!



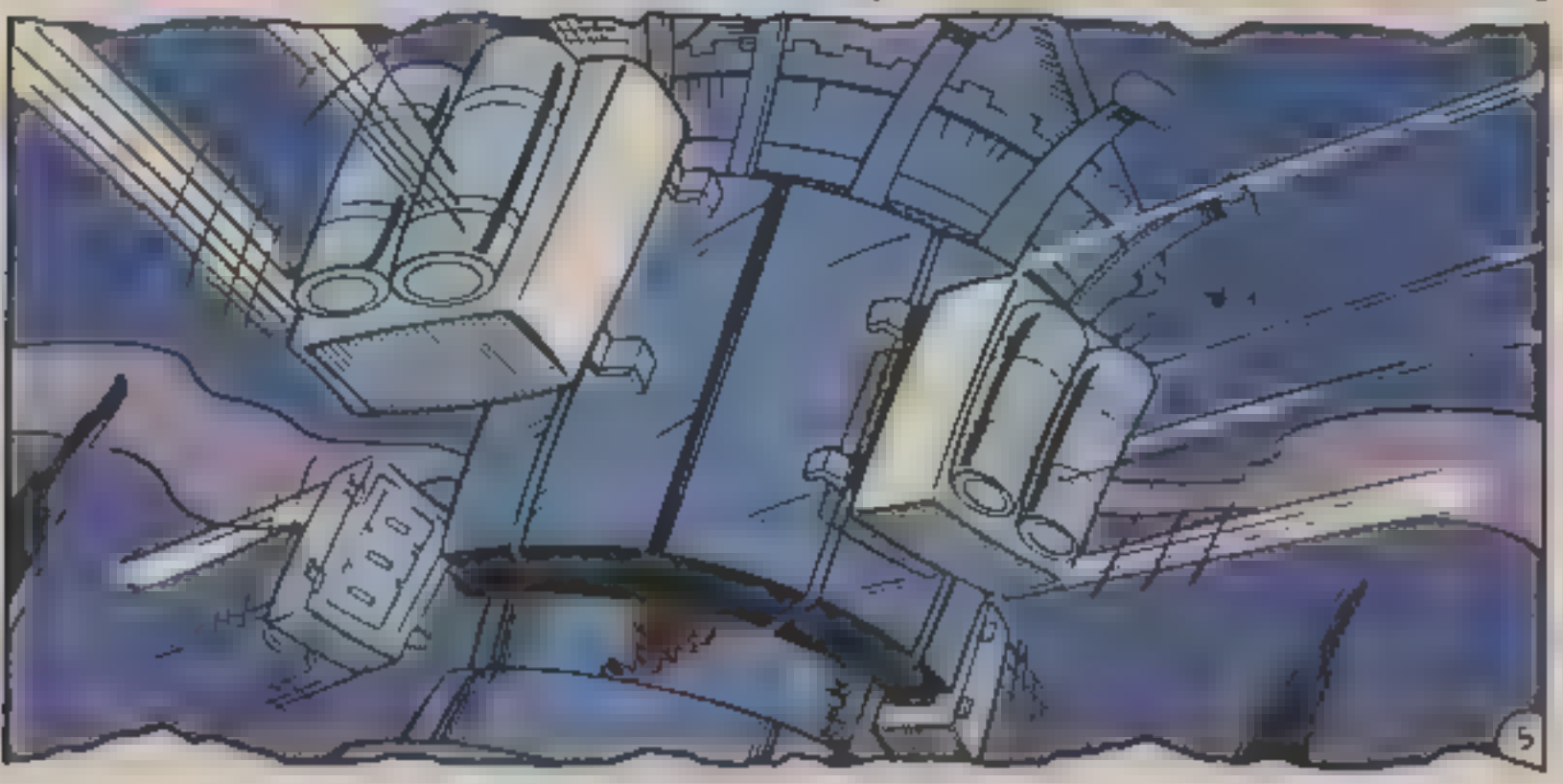

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THAT MANEUVER?
THAT I'D LAUGH MYSELF SILLY?
HOW DISAPPOINTING!
I AT LEAST EXPECTED BETTER OF YOU, ECH DNA!

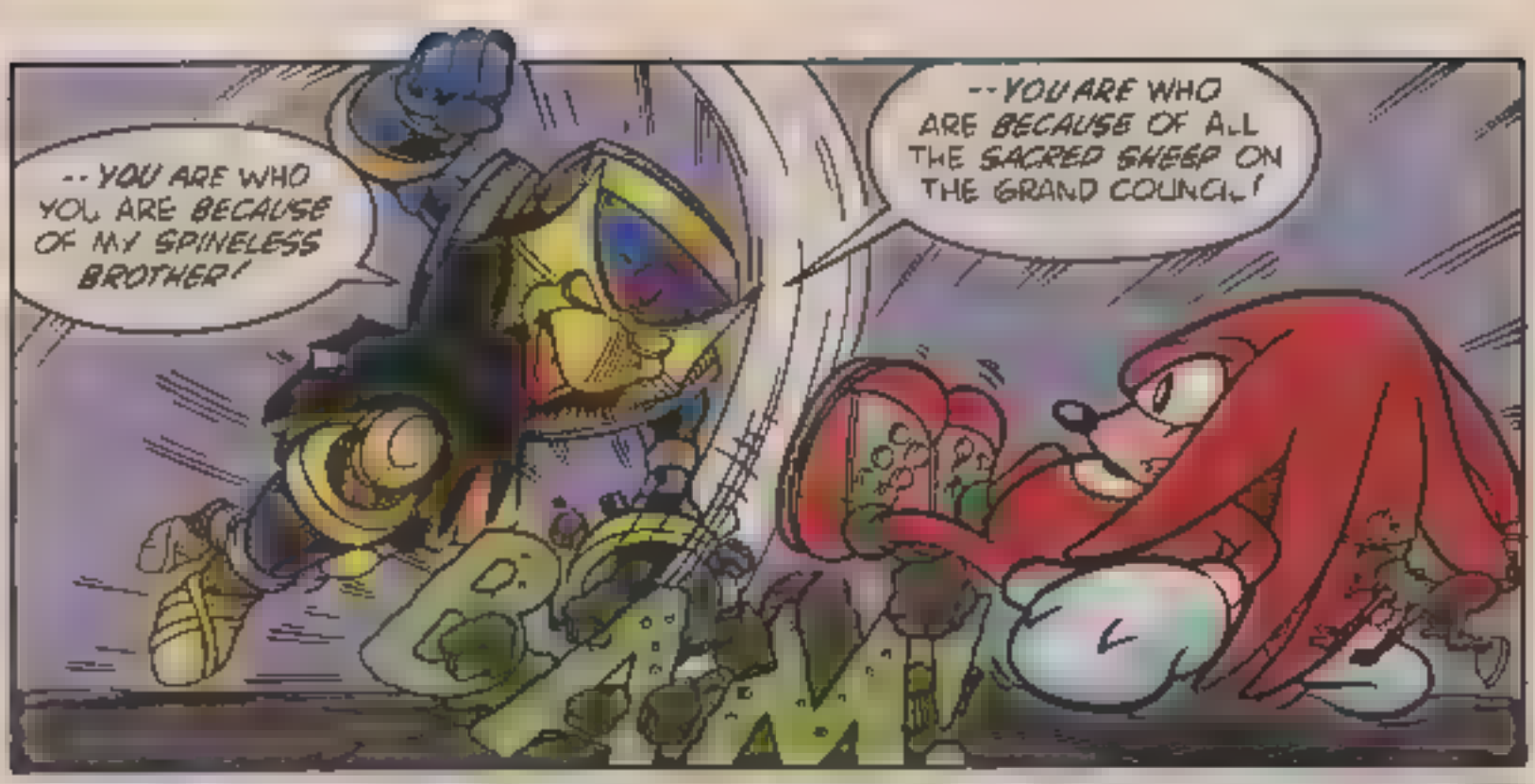
THE NAME'S KNUCKLES, ENERJAK--

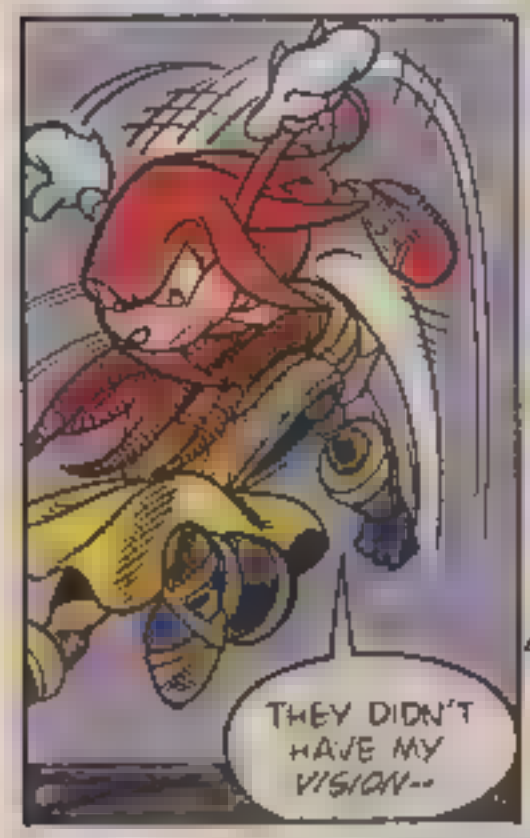
--OR SHOULD I SAY-- GREAT UNCLE DIMITRI?

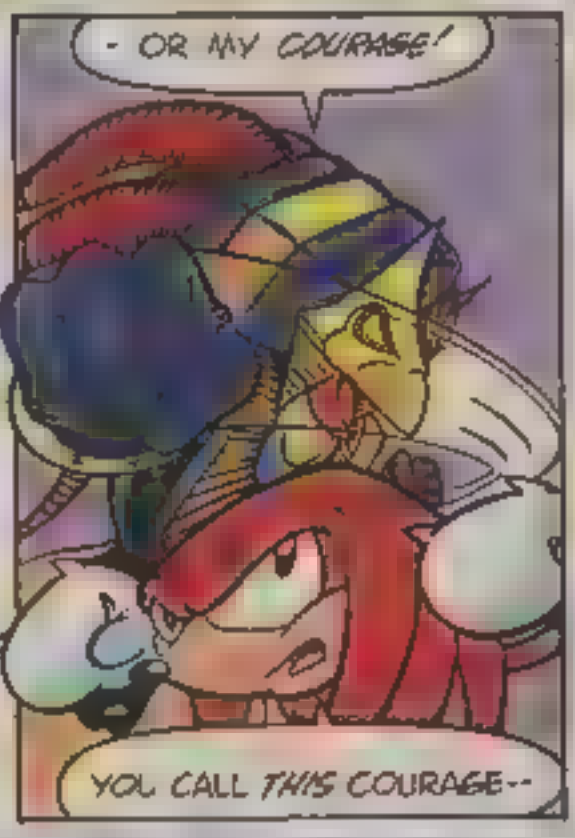

THE ONLY ECH DNA WHO EVER PUT HIMSELF OVER HIS OWN KIND!
I'VE KNOWN ALL ABOUT YOU FOR A LONG TIME!

I AM WHAT I AM BECAUSE OF YOU!
NO--

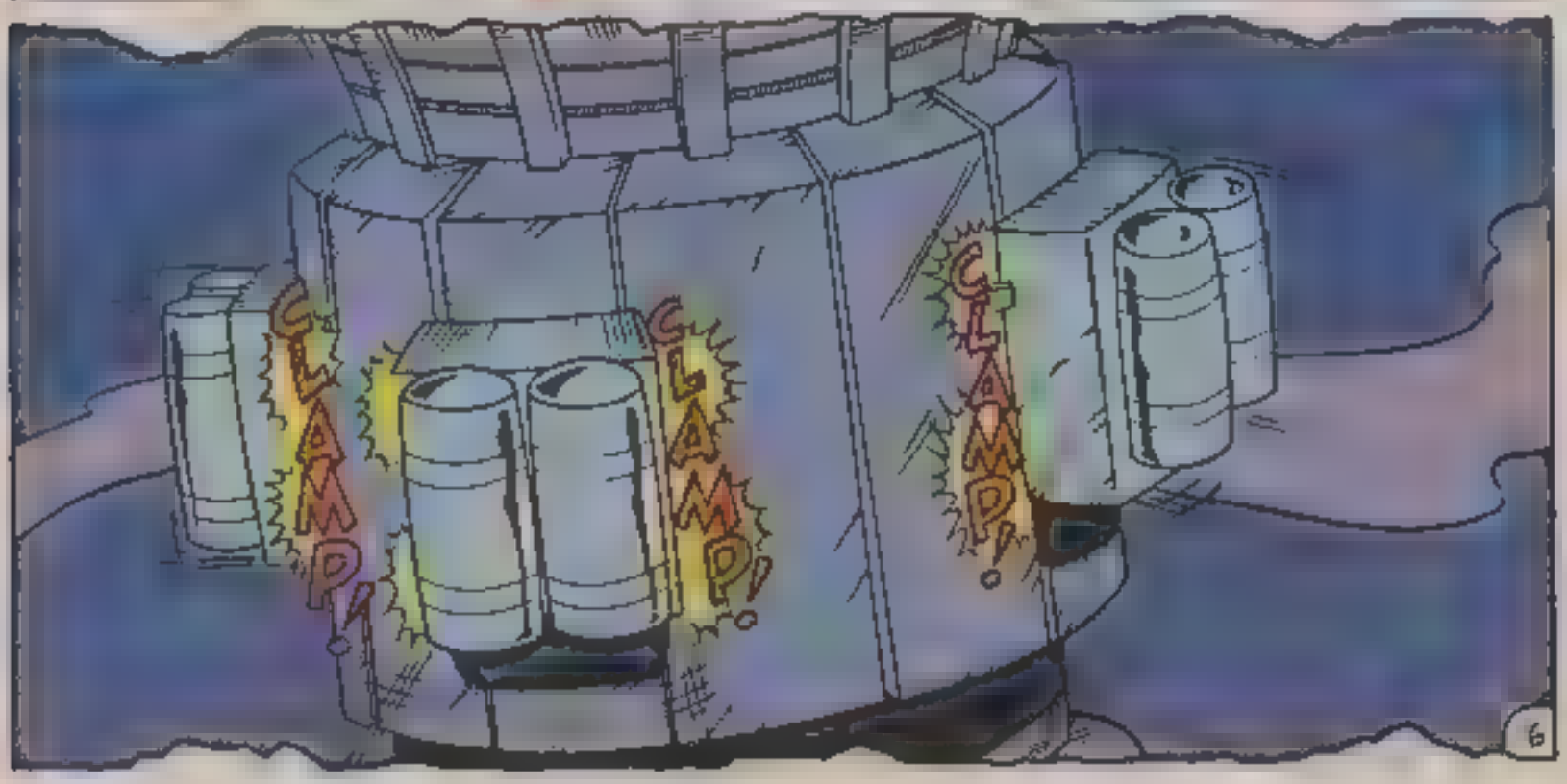



--YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE BECAUSE OF MY SPINELESS BROTHER!
--YOU ARE WHO ARE BECAUSE OF ALL THE SACRED SHEEP ON THE GRAND COUNCIL!
BAM!


THEY DIDN'T HAVE MY VISION--


- OR MY COURAGE!
YOU CALL THIS COURAGE--

--FIGHTING WITH ENHANCED STRENGTH?!!

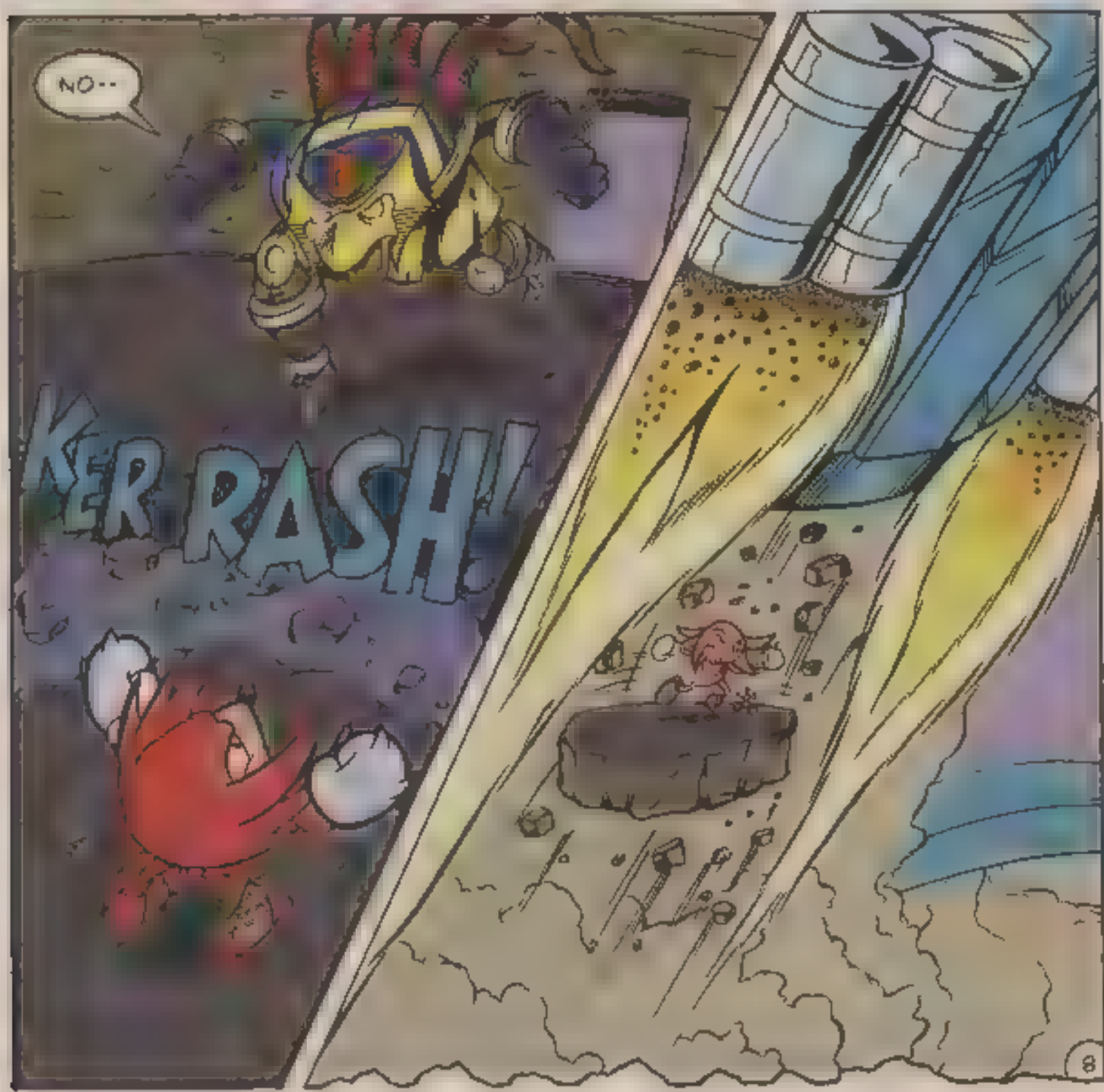

CLAMP!
CLAMP!
CLAMP!

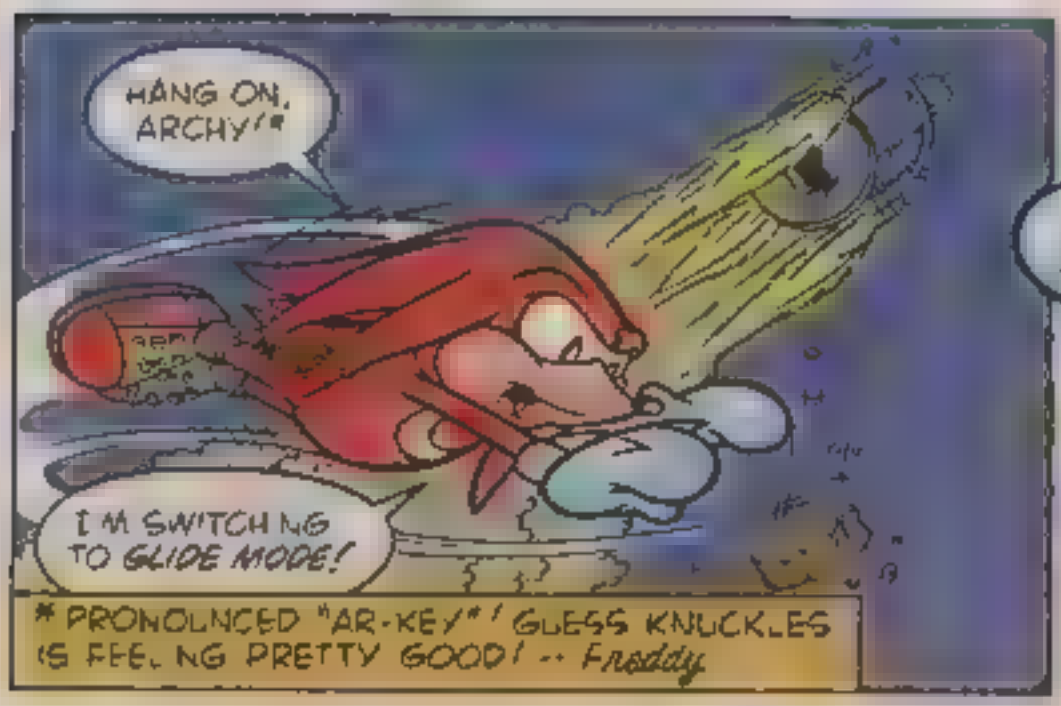
I NEED ONLY MY RAW NATURAL STRENGTH TO TAKE YOU OUT, PUP!
YOU MAY BE STRONGER--
BLAM!
-- BUT DO YOU KNOW HOW TO FIGHT?!
POW!
I HAVE FORGOTTEN MORE THAN YOU HAVE LEARNED!
WHERE'S YOUR BRAVADO NOW, GREAT-NEPHEW!
GRRROOOAARRRR

IT'S WITH MY PRIDE AND HONOR GREAT-UNCLE!
WHACK!

THOSE ARE QUALITIES I'LL NEVER LOSE--

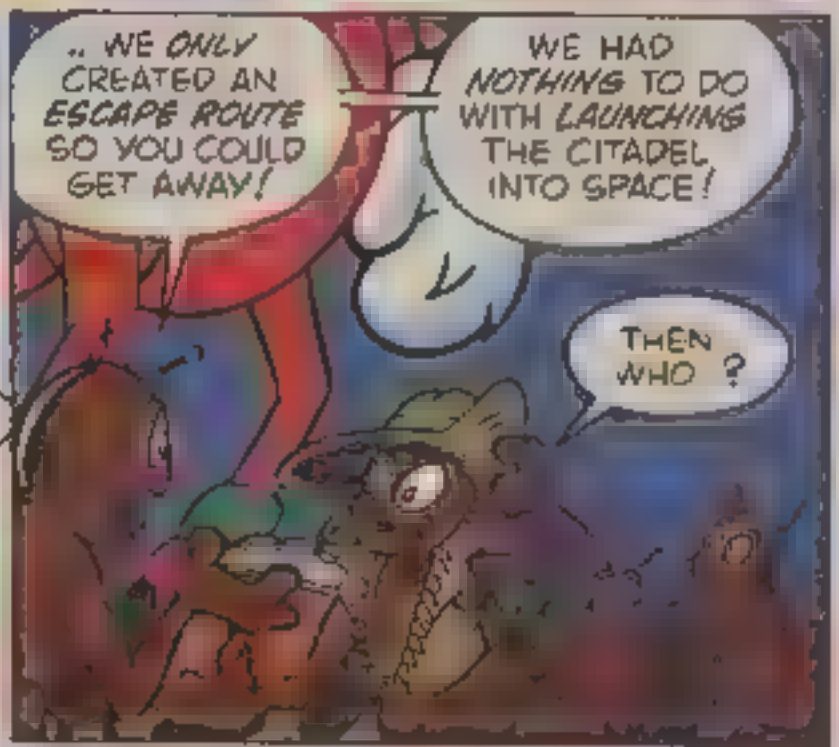
--QUALITIES YOU NEVER HAD!
WHAP!

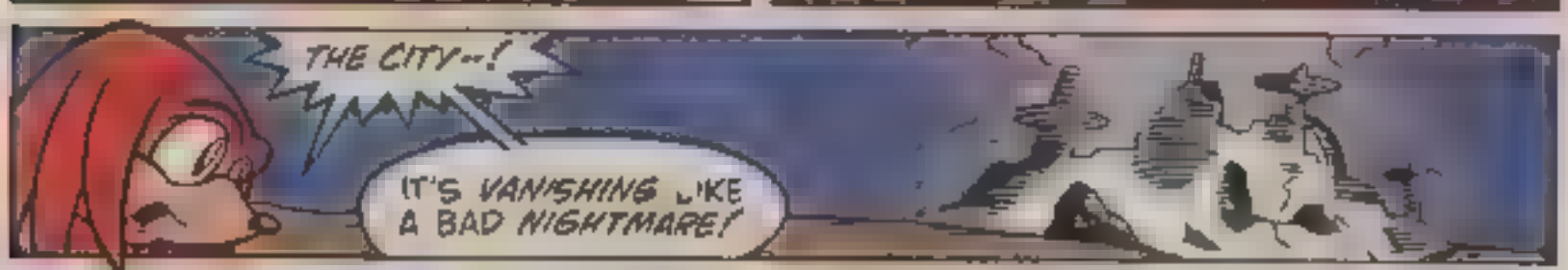

NO--
KER RASH!


HANG ON, ARCHY!*
I'M SWITCHING TO GLIDE MODE!
* PRONOUNCED "AR-KEY"! GUESS KNUCKLES IS FEELING PRETTY GOOD! -- Freddy

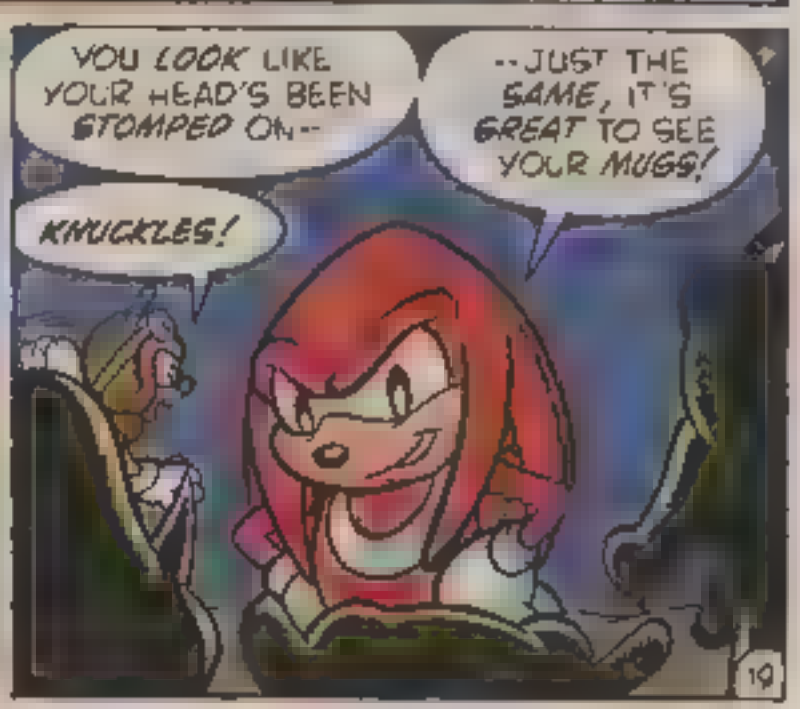
HOW'S THAT FOR A LANDING?

THANK YOU EVERYONE, FOR COMING THROUGH AS I KNEW YOU WOULD!
BUT, ARCHIMEDES--


.. WE ONLY CREATED AN ESCAPE ROUTE SO YOU COULD GET AWAY!
WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH LAUNCHING THE CITADEL INTO SPACE!
THEN WHO ?


THE CITY--!
IT'S VANISHING LIKE A BAD NIGHTMARE!

OOOH-- BOOY..
I FEEL LIKE MY HEAD'S BEEN STOMPED ON!


YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR HEAD'S BEEN STOMPED ON--
--JUST THE SAME, IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOUR MUGS!
KNUCKLES!

YOU DID IT *AGAIN*, KNUX!

BUT HOW'D'JA DO IT *THIS* TIME?

YEAH!

FOR ONCE, GUYS, I *CAN'T* TAKE THE *CREDIT!*

IT WAS A *COMBINATION* OF THINGS THAT ADDED UP WHEN I PUT 'EM *TOGETHER!*

MY *DAD'S* STORY-- PLUS *ARCHIMEDES'*-- PLUS *ENERJAK'S!*

I COULD'VE *NEVER* DEFEATED ENERJAK ON MY *OWN!* HOWEVER, IF I COULD DEPEND ON THE *UNLIKELIEST* OF SOURCES FOR *HELP*--

--I STOOD A *BETTER* THAN EVEN CHANCE OF *BEATING* HIM!

UNTIL NOW, I WAS BASICALLY A *LONER*, RELYING *ONLY* ON MYSELF!

I THINK ENERJAK *SENSED* THAT, AND FIGURED I *WOULDN'T* GO BEYOND THAT!

I SIMPLY LEARNED FROM *HISTORY!* ENERJAK *DIDN'T!*

FOR ALL HIS *OMNIPOTENCE*, EVEN ENERJAK *DIDN'T* KNOW ABOUT THE OASIS WE FOUND IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE!

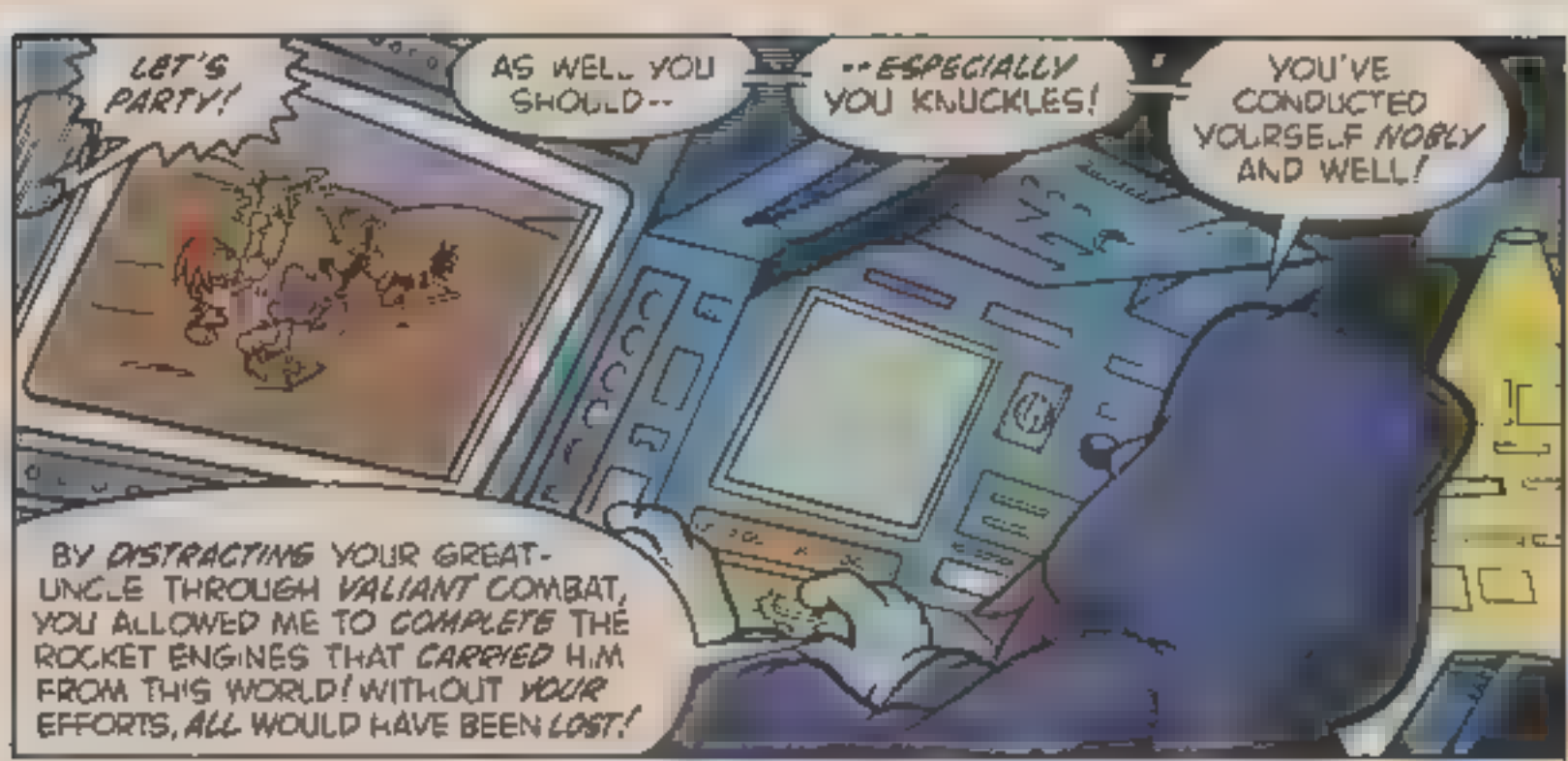
AND WE *STILL* HAVEN'T A CLUE WHERE IT CAME FROM OR *DISAPPEARED* TO!

AWWW -

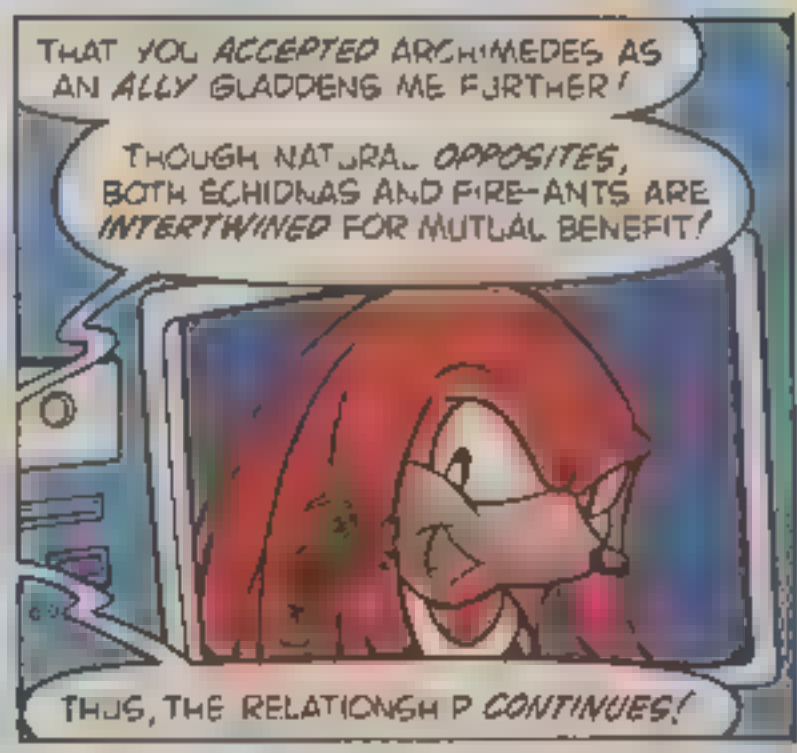
WHO *CARES?*

THE *GOOD* GUYS *WON* ANYWAY!

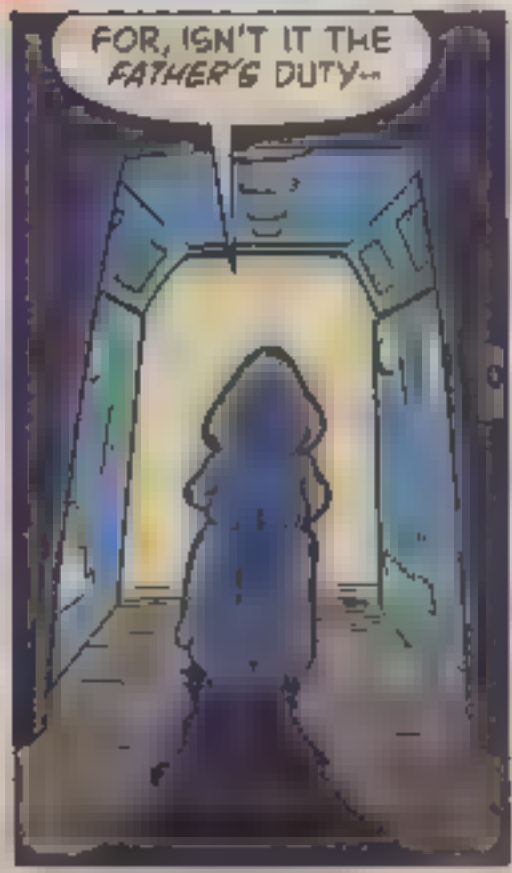
LET'S PARTY!

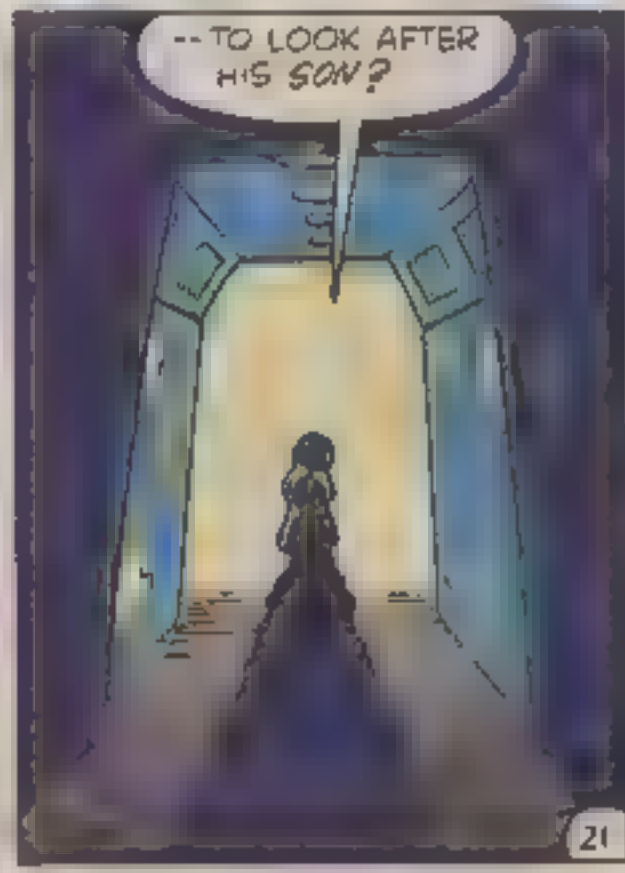

LET'S PARTY!
AS WELL YOU SHOULD--
--ESPECIALLY YOU KNUCKLES!
YOU'VE CONDUCTED YOURSELF NOBLY AND WELL!
BY DISTRACTING YOUR GREAT-UNCLE THROUGH VALIANT COMBAT, YOU ALLOWED ME TO COMPLETE THE ROCKET ENGINES THAT CARRIED HIM FROM THIS WORLD! WITHOUT YOUR EFFORTS, ALL WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST!

YOU UNDERSTOOD THE MESSAGE OF HISTORY-- WE ARE ALL TOGETHER AS ONE!


THAT YOU ACCEPTED ARCHIMEDES AS AN ALLY GLADDENS ME FURTHER!
THOUGH NATURAL OPPOSITES, BOTH ECHIDNAS AND FIRE-ANTS ARE INTERTWINED FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT!
THUS, THE RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES!

AS FOR ME, I SHALL KEEP A WATCHFUL EYE AS MY FOREFATHERS HAVE DONE FOR COUNTLESS GENERATIONS!


FOR, ISN'T IT THE FATHER'S DUTY--


--TO LOOK AFTER HIS SON?

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EVER SINCE I MADE *INITIAL* CONTACT TO BEGIN YOUR TRAINING FOR MORE *ADVANCED* RESPONSIBILITIES, I *DIDN'T* THINK YOU COULD *ADAPT* TO NEW SITUATIONS--*

--BUT YOU *SURPRISED* ME!

I WILL ADMIT -

*REMEMBER "*FIRE DRILL*", WAY BACK WHEN, IN *SONIC & KNUCKLES #1*?-Freddy

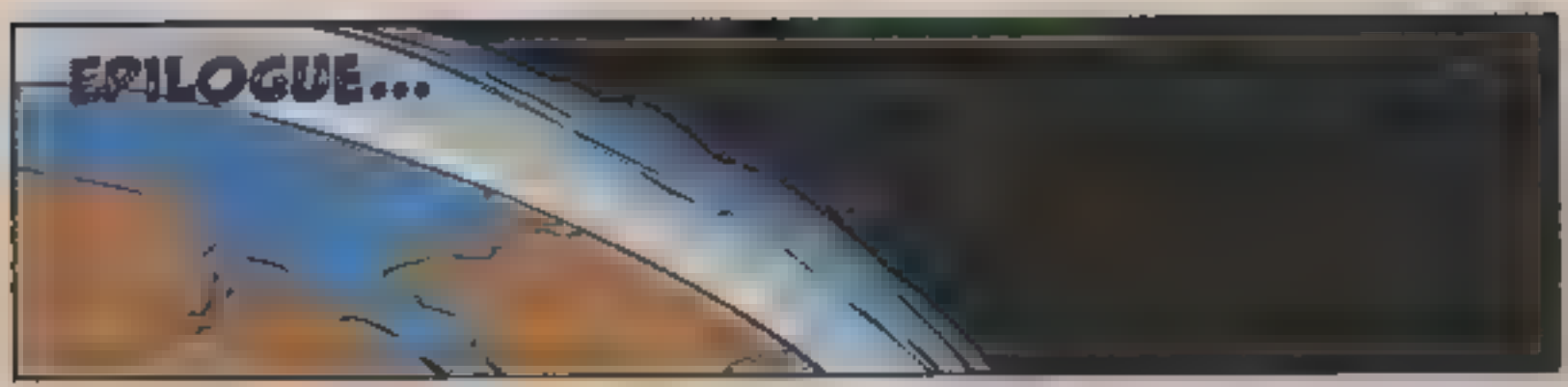
--YOU'VE *SHOWN* ME YOU'RE UP TO THE TASK OF BEING *GUARDIAN* OF THE *FLOATING ISLAND!*

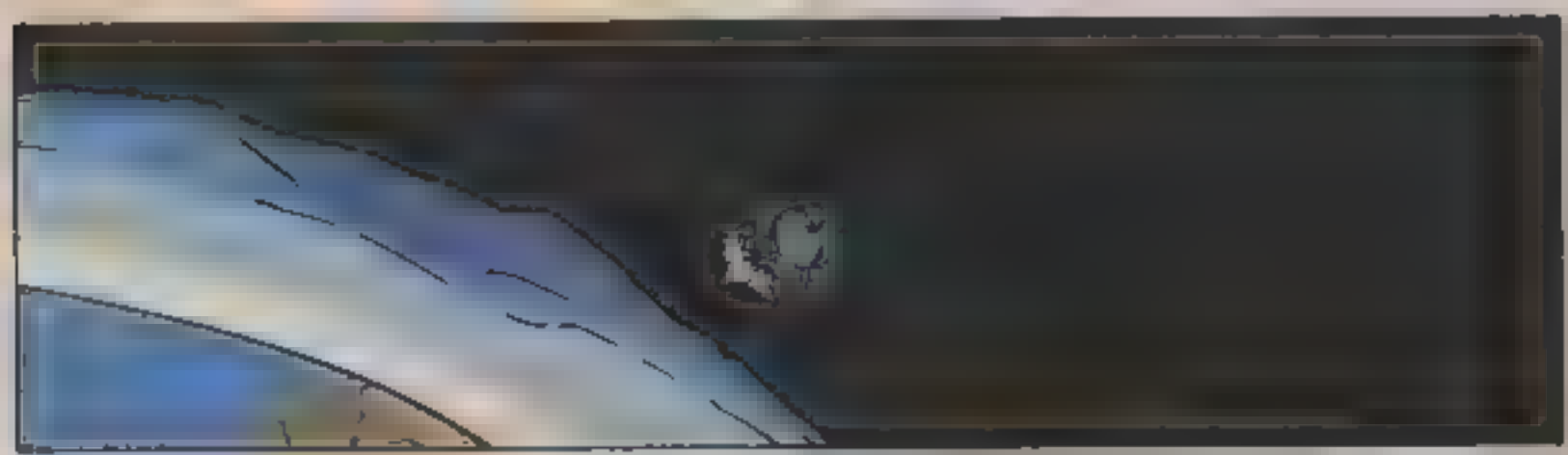
JUST *DON'T* LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD, M'LAD!

YOU'RE *OKAY* YOURSELF, ARCHY-- FOR A *FIRE-ANT*, THAT'S!

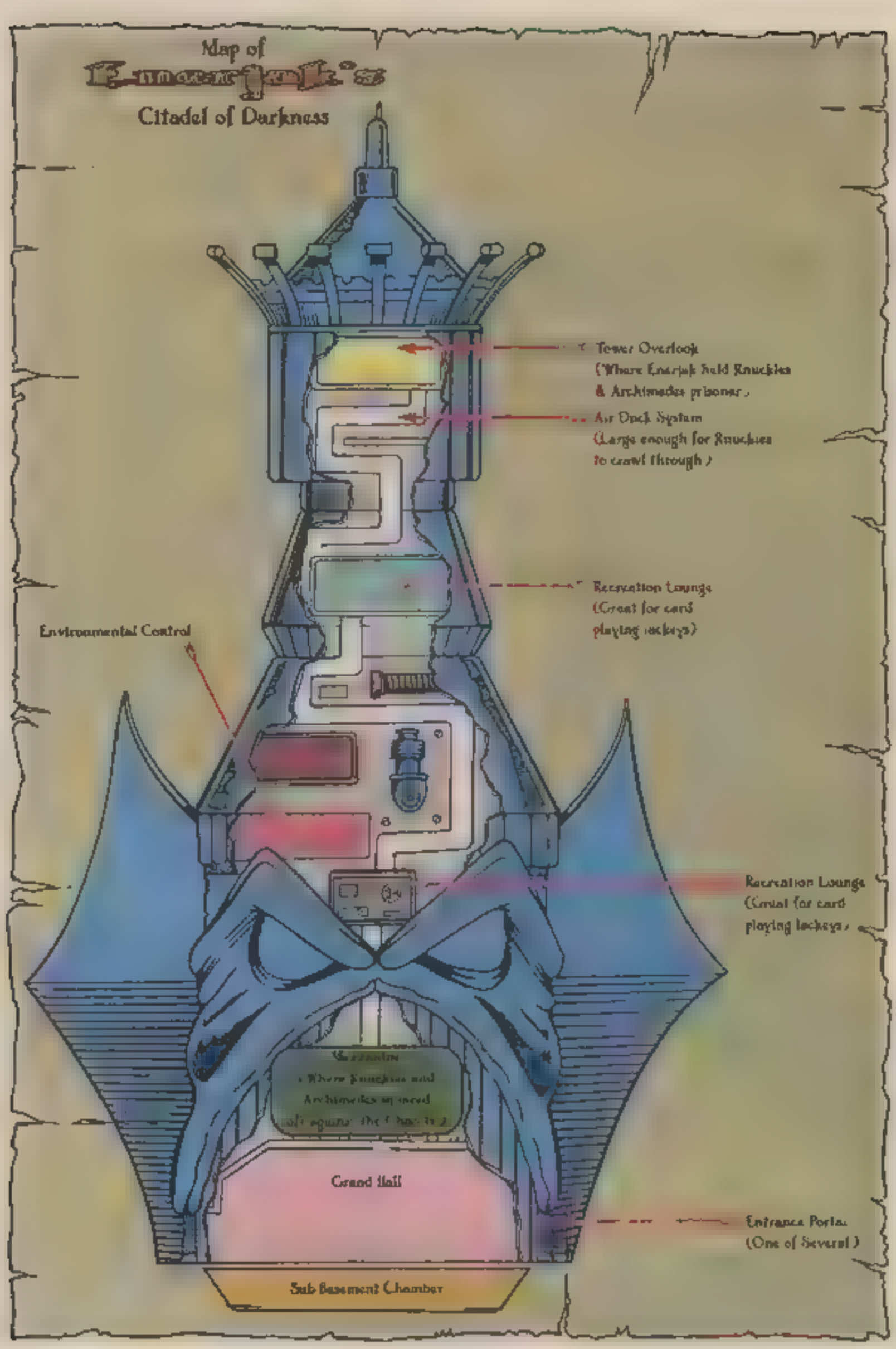
Y'KNOW--

--I THINK THIS IS THE *BEGINNING* OF A BEAUTIFUL *FRIENDSHIP!*


EPILOGUE...



HAHAHAHAHA
THE END-
--FOR NOW


Map of
Citadel of Darkness
Tower Overlook
(Where Enerjak held Knuckles
& Archimedes prisoner.)
Air Duct System
(Large enough for Knuckles
to crawl through.)
Recreation Lounge
(Great for card
playing lackeys)
Environmental Control
Recreation Lounge
(Great for card
playing lackeys)
Grand Hall
Entrance Portal
(One of Several)
Sub Basement Chamber

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P.S.: THE THIRD AND FINAL CHAPTER OF KNUCKLES' "RITE OF PASSAGE" ALSO SIGNIFIES THE END OF HIS COMIC BOOK SERIES. YOU ASK, "HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO WAIT FOR ANOTHER ONE?" THAT, DEAR READER, DEPENDS ON YOU. YES, YOU! ANY KNUCKLES FAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN SEEING THE RAD RED IN HIS OWN REGULAR SERIES (WITH ONLY RARE APPEARANCES BY THE BLUE BLUR) WILL HAVE TO ACT NOW! WHEN YOU SEND IN YOUR LETTER, WRITE "I WANT MY KNUCKLES COMIC NOW!" ON THE TOP OF YOUR LETTER IN RED INK. THAT SHOULD GET OUR ATTENTION, DON'T YOU THINK?

DEAR KNUCKLES,

YOU'RE A TOTALLY COOL ECHIDNA! GOOD LUCK FOR WHEN YOU FIGHT SONIC AGAIN. BELIEVE ME, YOU'LL NEED IT! I MOST DEFINITELY WANT TO SEE MORE OF THE CHAOTIX! BY THE WAY, TELL CHARMY THAT I THINK HE'S CUTE. YOU'RE CUTE, TOO. I'VE ENJOYED SEEING YOU IN SONIC'S COMIC, BUT IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GET YOUR OWN COMIC. I'LL BE SURE TO GET YOUR MINI-SERIES WHEN IT COMES OUT. I PLAY YOU EVERY TIME I PLAY THE SONIC & KNUCKLES GAME. LOVE YA!

SUSAN HATFIELD
DOTHAN, AL

I'M CUTE. HE'S CUTE. MAYBE WE CAN ALL BE CUTE TOGETHER! THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT, SUSAN. I'D BE BLUSHING RIGHT NOW IF I WASN'T ALREADY RED. SO YOU SAY YOU WANT MORE CHAOTIX? YOUR WISH IS GRANTED. AS THE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOVE SAYS, A CHAOTIX SOLO WILL APPEAR AS PART OF THE EVENT CALLED "MECHA MADNESS." CHECK IT OUT FOR YOURSELF AND YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED!

DEAR KNUCKLES,

SOMETIMES I LIKE YOU BETTER THAN SONIC (JUST DON'T TELL HIM I SAID THAT). WELL ANYWAY, I'VE BEEN STUDYING AUSTRALIAN ANIMALS IN SCHOOL. I STARTED STUDYING THE ECHIDNA (OF COURSE), THE KANGAROO, THE WOMBAT, THE KOALA, THE PLATYPUS AND THE TASMANIAN DEVIL. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO PRONOUNCE ECHIDNA, AT FIRST, BUT MY TEACHER SAID "EH-KID-NA" OUT LOUD AND I CAUGHT ON QUICK.

JOSHUA NOLAN
W. WARWICK, RI

THESE AUSTRALIAN ANIMALS SOUND A LOT LIKE THE RESIDENT SPECIES OF DOWNUNDA. EITHER WAY, I LIKE THE FACT THAT US ECHIDNAS ARE GETTING THE RECOGNITION WE DESERVE. I NEVER THOUGHT ANYONE WOULD WANT TO STUDY SOMEONE LIKE ME IN SCHOOL. THEY USUALLY WANT TO STUDY HEDGEHOGS OR SOMETHING. THANKS, JOSHUA, YOU MADE MY DAY.

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